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THE LETTERS OF
RICHARD STEELE

SELECTED AND COLLATED
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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

R. BRIMLEY JOHNSON

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PREFACE

Most of Steele's *Letters* that have come down to us were printed in *The Epistolary Correspondence of Sir Richard Steele*, in two volumes, 1787, edited by John Nichols. After this issue, further manuscripts were discovered by, or sent to, Nichols, who printed them, with fragments of three plays, etc., in 1809; the new letters, mostly undated, occupying about thirty pages.

Both manuscripts were then deposited in the British Museum, where some of Nichols' notes, conjectural dates, emendations, can be read, with a few most interesting comments by Lady Steele herself, who often added dates, which were sometimes, but not always, accepted by Nichols.

The text of letters selected here have been collated from the original manuscripts, correcting errors made by Nichols and, in some cases, finding a different interpretation of words written indistinctly. I have restored all Steele's abbreviations and irregular spellings, though *not* his absolutely haphazard use of capital letters. Any word omitted in the original (from obvious carelessness) is added within square brackets, some of them written in by Nichols, but not indicated as insertions. I have

in almost every case accepted his conjectural dates, but in every case also enclosed such guesses within square brackets. The difference in inks, and sometimes obviously in handwriting, makes it easy to be certain of what has been added by him—or by Lady Steele.

Steele's handwriting is very irregular and careless, but not often difficult to make out. It must be admitted that some exceptionally careless scrawls bear unmistakable evidence of the writer's own statement that he had been freely indulging in the "cup that cheers," and there are more examples than confessions.

The later portion of the correspondence, that is, most of the letters not written to Lady Steele, were preserved, and arranged, by their daughter Elizabeth—some being copies in her own hand.

I have included some letters published as dedications; which were, in fact, sincere and warm-hearted expressions of personal affection and admiration; very characteristic of the man himself.

R. B. J.

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THE LETTERS OF RICHARD STEELE

RICHARD STEELE

1672–1729

I

THERE are four great writers of love-letters in English literature : Swift, Steele and the Brownings. Stella belonged to the secret places of Swift's life, the tender playfulness and simple humanity he so jealously hid from the world ; Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett were poet-lovers, mated by vision and thought ; it is Steele alone who reveals the normal eager wooer and devoted husband ; hoping and worshipping, doubting and quarrelling —now in the seventh heaven of delight, now crying in outer darkness—always thinking of the beloved, with a boy's heart and a man's care.

Here, too, is the prose of love : a tale of " walnuts five a penny," " insufferable " landladies, and " peevish brats," too often, alas, of bills and loans. From the first he had repudiated the artificial language of romance. " I shall affect plainness and sincerity in my discourse to you, as much as other lovers do perplexity and rapture. Instead

of saying, ' I shall die for you,' I profess I should be glad to live my life with you." And so he remained till death, every moment's thought tumbling out at the end of his pen—sometimes in two, or even three, hurried notes a day, that speak the very man himself, in all his simplicity and impatience, always bidding her be gay and kind, often repenting and rebuking his own neglect.

No doubt Steele's habits were less domesticated than his heart ; he was incurably sociable and good-natured, unpractical and extravagant, over-estimating his resources and for ever scheming to attain the wealth he was ready to spend on her before it materialized—" you shall be better provided for than any other family in England."

It is unreasonable, nevertheless, to accuse a man of alcoholism who subscribes himself " dead drunk " for love ; and if Steele was rather too well acquainted with the morning headache, no one of his contemporaries could plead total exemption from that complaint. He never pretended to saintship. His was a convivial soul : the average man, not very resolute in self-conquest ; like all of us most easily irritated by the one he loved most.

Of her feelings we have little direct evidence on good authority ; but we should recall Steele's own words—" with me, Madam, the only lasting motive to love, is the hope of its becoming mutual " ; and

the most constant lover could not maintain so long the glowing language of playful fondness without substantial security of its return. "Her name was" Mary—"for particular reasons however I shall conceal it under that of" Prue—(as he might have written); the reason being that she was, it seems, a little more *prudent*, or farseeing, than he: a quality always vexatious to the optimist. But we need not suppose her mean or money-loving, because she sometimes distrusted the airy calculations of her irresponsible spouse. If at times, again, she plays the Queen of Beauty he would have it she was, we need not call her coquette. Uttering every thought the moment it came into his head, Steele expressly begs her "to show his letters to no one living," for the most excellent reason—that "other people cannot judge of so delicate a circumstance as the commerce between man and wife." He would never have seriously maintained the criticisms or complaints here spoken in haste; most certainly would not have permitted another to repeat them.

Miss Scurlock's opinion of Steele before marriage was plainly expressed to her mother: it is no less clear that she was determined to have him:

"But he has a competency in worldly goods to make easy, with a mind so richly adorned as to exceed an equivalent to the greatest estate in the world,

in my opinion : in short, his person is what I like ; his temper is what I am sure will make you, as well as myself, perfectly happy, if the respect of a lover, with the tender fondness of a dutiful son, can make you so ; and, for his understanding and morals, I refer you to his ' Christian Hero ' which I remember you seemed to approve. . . . What I desire is, your consent and blessing to my putting it out of my power to delay, and so perhaps to lose, my first and only inclination ; for I shall never meet with a prospect of happiness if this should vanish."

This pleasing anecdote confirms her generous affection :

" Soon after his marriage, Steele desired, if she was not engaged, his wife would accompany him on a visit he intended making in the afternoon. The carriage was ordered ; and, without acquainting her to whom the visit was designed, they drove to a boarding-school in the environs of London, where they alighted ; and presently a young lady appeared to whom Steele showed the greatest fondness, insomuch that his wife asked him, ' if the child was his ? ' On his acknowledging that she was ; ' then,' said the lady, ' I beg she may be mine too.' She was accordingly taken home, and treated as their own ; but, by order of the mistress of the house, she was called Miss Ousley."

To my thinking both these passages show considerable similarity of nature between Steele and his wife which, if at times leading to dispute, must fundamentally have encouraged their natural sympathy.

There is, moreover, a brief comment written by her upon the one of his letters preserved in the Museum that most significantly resembles his own way of expressing emotion: "He was, when he wrote the following letter, as agreeable and pleasant a man as any in England.—Oct. 1671."

There is the more reason for dwelling upon Steele's practice in love; because a great part of his writing, the most permanent and important, was directed to establish the "Rules of Honourable Passion," to please the ladies, and advise young men in love. He had written to Miss Scurlock, "I know no reason why difference of sex should make our language to each other differ from the ordinary rules of right reason"; and, as Thackeray remarks, "he was the first of our writers who really seemed to admire *and respect* women. . . . It was he who first began to pay manly homage to their goodness *and understanding* as well as to their tenderness and beauty." *The Tatler* and its successors were the first serious essays written for women or for young men as social beings. He is "a knight errant with the pen . . . the Secretary of Love." "When it is a woman's day, in my works I shall endeavour at a style and air suitable to their understanding. When I say this I must be understood to mean, *that I shall not lower but exalt the subjects I treat upon.*"

The precepts to youth, here so often and so

pleasantly invoked, were no less surely honoured in the observance, towards his own " dear tyrant."

II

Little is known of Steele's ancestry beyond his own description of himself as " an Englishman born in Dublin," and of his mother as " a very beautiful woman, of a noble spirit." It is now established, however, that the elder Richard was an attorney who married Elinor (born a Sheyles and, at the time, widow of Thomas Symes) in 1670, their son being born early in 1672. Both parents died while he was a child, and he was brought up by an uncle (by marriage), Henry Gascoigne, a person of some influence in high places.

There are practically no records of his life at Charterhouse or at Christchurch, save for the evidence of intimate friendship with Addison, his comrade alike at school and college.

Though he acquired a respectable familiarity with the classics, practically essential to a gentleman of those days, Steele had no strong taste for learning, or for any persistent application ; and it is not surprising that the Irish wars should have tempted him from academic pursuits : " I mounted a war-horse," he tells us, " with a great sword in my hand, and planted myself behind King William the third against Louis the fourteenth."

In other words, he entered the army, like others of good social position, as a trooper; and gained some military experience in that capacity, until Lord Cutts gave him a commission.

From this period emerge two purely personal episodes, that are extraordinarily characteristic; revealing an attitude towards himself and mankind that remained with him to the end.

Finding "an ensign of the guards, a way of life exposed to much irregularity . . . he writ, for his own private use, a little book called *The Christian Hero*, with a design principally to fix upon his own mind a strong impression of virtue and religion, in opposition to a stronger propensity towards unwarrantable pleasures." No man, surely, was more frankly humble about his own failings than Dick Steele; and when this "secret admonition" did not prove strong enough for its author's purpose, he "printed the book with his name" in 1701, by way of witness against himself: a public confession of faith, to which he would thus be compelled to conform.

The sequel has all the elements of unconscious comedy, and might certainly be made an occasion for the scoffer; but it was, no doubt, equally sincere, however naïve. "From being thought no undelightful companion he was soon reckoned a disagreeable fellow"; comparisons between

his private conduct and public professions were inevitable, and at last drove him to a duel which, to his credit, he strenuously attempted, on principle, to avoid. Something however must be done to convince the world that piety had not made him a dull dog; and he, accordingly, wrote the Comedy called, "somewhat quaintly," *The Funeral* (1701), "in which—though full of incidents that move laughter—virtue and vice appear just as they ought." Thus began, as it were on impulse, his literary career: as with most of his contemporaries, with a play.

As it happens, perhaps not entirely by chance, much of his later life was more intimately concerned with the stage; but for the moment we are chiefly concerned with Steele, the dramatist, as a zealous supporter of Jeremy Collier's famous *Short View* in its resolute protest against the indecencies of Restoration drama. He had, as we see, already taken care to give a *correct* view of virtue and vice: but *The Lying Lover, or the Ladies Friendship*, 1703, was a deliberate attempt to carry out Collier's severe demands, and was, not unnaturally, "damned for its piety." Once more the unfortunate man endeavoured to retrieve a moral enthusiasm that had subjected him to misunderstanding, and *The Tender Husband: or the Accomplished Fools*, 1705, was not so obviously a sermon. But he was still

careful to "avoid everything immoral"; and, whether for that or other reasons, the play was not a success.

III

Yet, probably, he had intended to persevere with drama, had not private affairs intervened. It was most probably soon after the appearance of *The Tender Husband*, certainly during the year, that he married Margaret Stretch (*née* Ford), a widow with considerable property in the Barbadoes. He was already in debt, and has been frequently accused of mercenary motives; but all we know of the man would contradict such a charge. It was actually announced that he was prevented from completing another play he had in hand, by the death of a dear friend in 1707. By his own statement, moreover, we learn that "his late wife had so extreme a value for him, that she, by fine, conveyed to him her whole estate."

It is further clear that he was at this period often with his regiment in the wars; very probably the "laboratory at Poplar," where he is said to have been in pursuit of the philosophers' stone, occupied much of his attention; and the Kit-Cat Club, recently founded by Jacob Tomson, bookseller-publisher, would have a strong appeal to so sociable a "good fellow."

Finally, in August 1706, he had entered into that political-court-literary life, so general in an age of the cultured patron, which—in varying degrees —absorbed Swift and Gay, Matt. Prior and Addison himself. Through connections with the Peerage, he was appointed "gentleman waiter to Prince George of Denmark," at £100 a year, and, in May 1707, official Gazetteer, at £300, subject to a tax of £45; to be supplemented three years later by a Commissionership of the stamp office, carrying another £300.

IV

No doubt his whirlwind courtship of Mary Scurlock, and their hasty marriage, after less than a year's experience as a widower, in September 1707, served to concentrate his mind upon the practical business of life; as it stimulated him to yet another form of activity, the issue of the now famous *Tatler*, of which the first number appeared on the 12th of April, 1709.

To-day we associate this journal, and its successors, with the birth of the Essay and the new appeal from literature to Society; but, in the beginning, it was more obviously a news-sheet and a party organ. Only when his side "went out" and "influence" was against him, in all probability by agreement with the new ministers, *The Tatler*

was discontinued (January 2, 1711), and the more literary *Spectator* appeared (on March 1), in which the co-operation of Addison, originated in the earlier journal, assumed a more leading and influential aspect.

He was now living " in the handsomest manner," and when his mother-in-law died in 1712 she left him another £500 a year ; at the end of this year, for whatever reason, *The Spectator* came to an end ; and its successor *The Guardian* only survived for six months of the next.

As Steele's *Letters* reveal the emotional nature of the man, his public writings and occupations no less accurately and completely reflect his mind. Ambition, combined with a genuine desire to improve mankind, was continually driving him back to politics ; and, to rebut the accusations of the *Examiner*—written by Swift, or Mrs. Manly for Swift, he resigned the Stamp Commissionership and his attendance upon the Prince, boldly asserted himself in the short-lived *Englishman* and *Crisis*, and entered public life, free from pecuniary obligation, as M.P. for Stockbridge, Hants : an error in strategy, as it proved, since his enemies were thereby tempted to the more direct and drastic measure of securing his " expulsion " from the House in May 1714.

Silenced awhile as a politician, Steele produced

two quite harmless periodicals, *The Lover* and the *Crisis*; when Queen Anne's death in July [1714] completely turned the tables upon his victorious detractors. The *Apology for Himself* was issued in October, and may be said to have closed a stormy political career.

Appointed Deputy Lieutenant of Middlesex; Surveyor of the Royal Stables, Hampton Court; and, a few years later, one of the Commissioners on Estates forfeited in Scotland; he re-entered the Commons, February 1715, as M.P. for Boroughbridge, and was knighted in April 1716.

But for us at least, and probably for Steele himself, the chief interest of these later years was the work done as *Supervisor of the Royal Theatre*, for which he secured a Patent in January 1715, to be severely handicapped by the revived activities of the rival house in Lincoln's Inn Fields. It was a difficult time for the Profession, but he was a generous ally, and the complicated financial difficulties in which the Company became involved never deterred his energy from production of good work that, in the long run, did much to improve the position of the stage.

Lady Steele, meanwhile, had become something of an invalid and was, temporarily, ordered to Carmarthenshire, where, in fact, she died towards the end of 1718, leaving her husband to heavier,

or at least more detailed, responsibilities—for their children's schooling and health. He had apparently made some profit from that select assembly "The Censorium," a kind of early evening club with Cabaret, which he opened in the Adelphi, and lost a good deal more over his latest "project" for bringing "live" fish into London.

It is impossible to suppose that Richard was ever himself again after the loss of "dear Prue"; and under other circumstances a mere difference of opinion on public questions would scarcely have led to the quarrel with Addison of 1719, so unfortunately not made up before the latter's death. The question involved once more placed Steele with the minority, and his prudent warnings against the South Sea Bubble were still more unpopular. He had not, however, lost permanent hold over the fortunes of the stage, and in the November of 1722 produced his own *Conscious Lovers*, aptly condemned by Fielding out of the mouth of Parson Adams, who naïvely applauds the author for gracing his Comedy with "some things almost solemn enough for a sermon."

He had not, in fact, many more years to live, very little more strength to carry out any further activities: though it is pleasant to record that arrangements were made at the last, by his theatrical friends and partners, which cleared his memory of all debt,

An invalid's life between Bath, Hereford, and Carmarthenshire diminished neither his powers of enjoyment nor his desire to please, and no fitter epitaph could have been composed than the story chance has preserved for us of the last days at Tygwyn, where he died in September 1729.

"*He would often be carried out on a summer's evening, where the country lads and lassies were assembled at their rural sports, and, with his pencil, give an order on his agent, the mercer, for a new gown to the best dancer.*"

V

We may almost say, again, that Steele provided us with his *own*, graver, epitaph, in one of those most simple and affectionate letters to his eldest daughter:

"I have taken a great deal of pains to serve the world, and hope God will allow me some time to serve my own family. My good girl, employ yourself always in some good work that you may be as good a woman as your mother."

Gay's generous tribute (in his pamphlet *The Present State of Wit*, 1711) shows how well his work was understood and appreciated by one, at least, of his contemporaries, who had wit enough to be a "wise judge." The case for Steele and the state of literature in his days could not be more justly expressed.

" I shall, in the first place, observe that there is a noble difference between him and all the rest of our polite and gallant authors. The latter have endeavoured to please the age by falling in with them, and encouraging them in their fashionable vices and false notions of things. It would have been a jest, some time since, for a man to have asserted that anything witty could be said in praise of a married state, or that devotion and virtue were anyway necessary to the character of a fine gentleman. Bickerstaff ventured to tell the town that they were a parcel of fops, fools, and vain coquettes ; but in such a manner as even pleased them, and made them more than half inclined to believe that he spoke truth.

" Instead of complying with the false sentiments or vicious tastes of the age—either in morality, criticism, or good breeding—he has boldly assured them, that they were altogether in the wrong ; and commanded them, with an authority which perfectly well became him, to surrender themselves to his argument for virtue and good sense.

" It is incredible to conceive the effect his writings have had on the town ; how many thousand follies they have either quite banished or given a very great check to ! how much countenance they have added to virtue and religion ! how many people they have rendered happy, by showing them it was their own fault if they were not so ! and, lastly, how entirely they have convinced our fops and young fellows of the value and advantages of learning !

" He has indeed rescued it out of the hands of pedants, and fools, and discovered the true method of making it amiable and lovely to all mankind. In the dress he gives it, it is a most welcome guest at

tea-tables and assemblies, and is relished and caressed by the merchants on the Change ; accordingly there is not a Lady at Court, nor a Banker in Lombard Street, who is not verily persuaded that Captain Steele is the greatest scholar and best casuist of any man in England.

" Lastly, his writings have set all our wits and men of letters on a new way of thinking, of which they had little or no notion before : and, although we cannot say that any of them have come up to the beauties of the original, I think we may venture to affirm, that every one of them writes and thinks much more justly than they did some time since."

There can be no doubt that, beneath his careless sociability, his very human love making, his wit and his party-journalism, Steele, like nearly all his contemporaries, was seriously concerned with his own conscience and the improvement of mankind—whether as playwright, essayist, or citizen. There were practically no specialists in those days. There was always a moral, and often much immorality, in novels and plays ; everyone went to church, and got drunk, at least one day in the week. Fielding, and even Sterne, talked ethics to their readers, no less solemnly than Richardson himself—or Dr. Johnson. Lord Chesterfield had his code.

Steele appears more ethically complicated, more inconsistent, if you will, for two excellent reasons. He was more frank, intimate, and impulsive than the others : he was more a man of the world than

scholar or litterateur: a little, in fact, of almost everything; eager and zealous about whatever he had in mind.

His difficulties were those of a gambler or an inventor, always accustomed to lavish expense; not the grim, disciplinary struggles of a Grub Street hack. Without being precisely a great writer, he originated a new force in literature, now generally—with some justice—associated with Addison: without being a "great" stylist, he had his moments of exquisitely written tales and reflections, when the word so perfectly fitted the thought, because he dared, without reservation, to be absolutely himself. To-day he lives for us as the father of the familiar Essay; the friend of big men; the passionate, simple-minded, faulty but loyal-hearted great lover!

R. BRIMLEY JOHNSON.

CHILDREN OF SIR RICHARD AND LADY STEELE

ELIZABETH, b. 1709, Lady Trevor, d. 1782.
RICHARD, b. 1710, d. 1716.
EUGENE, b. 1712, d. 1723.
MARY, b. 1713, d. 1730.

To Mrs. Mary Steele,

A Dedication.

The tender mother,
The fond wife,
The prudent mistresse,
The frugall housekeeper,
The chearfull companion,
The happy slave to
Her powerfull husband.

THE LETTERS OF RICHARD STEELE

LETTERS

TO MARY SCURLOCK

(Afterwards Mrs. Steele)

To Mary Scurlock

[*Saturday, Aug.* 9,] 1707.

Madam,

Your wit and beauty are suggestions which may easily lead you into the intention of my writing to you. You may be sure that I cannot be cold to so many good qualities as all that see you must observe in you. You are a woman of a very good understanding, and will not measure [my] thoughts by any ardour in my expressions, which is the ordinary language on these occasions.

I have reasons for hiding from my nearest relation any purpose I may have resolv'd upon of waiting on you if you permit it; and I hope you have confidence from mine, as well as your own character, that such a condescension should not be ill us'd by, Madam, yr most obedient ser'nt.

To the Same.

[*Aug.* 14,] 1707.

Madam,

I came to your house this night to wait on you; but you have commanded me to expect the happiness

of seeing you at another time of more leisure. I am now under your own roof while I write; and that imaginary satisfaction of being so near you, tho' not in your presence, has in it something that touches me with so tender ideas, that it is impossible for me to describe their force. All great passion makes us dumb; and the highest happiness, as well as highest grief, seizes us too violently to be expressed by our words.

You are so good as to let me know I shall have the honour of seeing you when I next come here. I will live upon that expectation, and meditate on your perfections till that happy hour. The vainest woman upon earth never saw in her glasse half the attractions which I view in you. Your air, your shape, your every glance, motion, and gesture, have such peculiar graces, that you possess my whole soul, and I know no life but in the hopes of your approbation: I know not what to say, but that I love you with the sincerest passion that ever entered the heart of man. I will make it the business of my life to find out means of convincing you that I prefer you to all that's pleasing upon earth. I am, Madam, your most obedient, most faithful humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

Friday Morning [*Aug.* 15, 1707].

MADAM,

Hoping you are in good health, as I am at this present writing, I take the liberty of bidding you

good morrow, and thanking you for yesterday's admission. To know so much pleasure with so much innocence is, methinks, a satisfaction beyond the present condition of human life ; but the union of minds in pure affection is renewing the first state of man.

You cannot imagine the gratitude with which I meditate on yr obliging behaviour to me, and how much improved in generous sentiments I return from yr company : at the same time that you give me passion for yourself, you inspire me also with a love of virtue.

Mrs. Warren inform'd me of your intention on Sunday morning. I forbear indulging myself in a stile which my eager wishes prompt me to, out of reverence to that occasion. I am, Madam, your most obliged, most faithful ser'nt.

To the Same.

Aug. 16, 1707.

MADAM,

Before the light this morning dawned upon the earth, I awaked, and lay in expectation of its return ; not that it could give any new sense of joy to me, but as I hoped it would blesse you with its chearful face, after a quiet which I wish'd you last night. If my prayers are heard, the day appeared with all the influence of a merciful Creator upon your person and actions. Let others, my lovely charmer, talk of a blind being that disposes their hearts ; I contemn their low images of love. I have not a thought

which relates to you, that I cannot with confidence beseech the All-seeing Power to blesse me in. May he direct you in all your steps, and reward your innocence, your sanctity of manners, your prudent youth, and becoming piety, with the continuance of His grace and protection. This is an unusual language to ladies; but you have a mind elevated above the giddy notions of a sex insnared by flattery and misled by a false and short adoration, into a solid and long contempt. Beauty, my fairest creature, palls in the possession; but I love also your mind: your soul is as dear to me as my own; and, if the advantage of a liberall education, some knowledge, and as much contempt of the world, joined with endeavours towards a life of strict virtue and religion, can qualifie me to raise new ideas in a breast so well disposed as yours is, our days will passe away with joy, and, instead of introducing melancholy prospects of decay, give us hope of eternal youth in a better life. I have but few minutes from the duty of my employment to write in, and without time to read over what I have writ; therefore beseech you to pardon the first hints of my mind, which I have expressed in so little order. I am, dearest creature, your most obedient, most devoted ser'nt.

To the Same.

[*Aug.* 17,] 1707.

MADAM,

I could not omit writing to you, though on Sunday morning, when I know I interrupt your

meditation on higher subjects ; there is nothing but Heaven itself which I prefer to your love, which shall be the pursuit of my life ; and I hope there will not a day appear to our lives end, wherein there will not appear some instance of an affection, not to be excelled but in the mansions of eternity, to which we may recommend ourselves by our behaviour to each other here. I am, my lovely charmer, your obedient.

To the Same.

Ld. Sunderland's Office, 1707.

Madam,

With what language shall I address my lovely fair, to acquaint her with the sentiments of an heart she delights to torture ? I have not a minute's quiet out of your sight ; and, when I'me with you, you use me with so much distance, that I am still in a state of absence, heightened with a view of the charms which I am deny'd to approach. In a word, you must give me either a fan, a mask, or a glove, you have wore, or I cannot live ; otherwise you must expect I'le kisse your hand, or, when I next sit by you, steal your handkerchief. You yourself are too great a bounty to be receiv'd at once ; therefore I must be prepared by degrees least [lest] the mighty gift distract me with joy. Dear Mrs. Scurlock, I am tir'd with calling you by that name ; therefore say the day in which you'le take that of, Madam, your most obedient, most devoted humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

SMITH STREET, WESTMINSTER, 1707.

MADAM,

I lay down last night with yr image in my thoughts, and have awak'd this morning in the same contemplation. The pleasing transport with which I'me delighted, has a sweetness in it, attended with a train of ten thousand soft desires, anxieties, and cares. The day arises on my hopes with new brightnesse ; youth, beauty, and innocence, are the charming objects that steal me from myself, and give me joys above the reach of ambition, pride, or glory. Believe me, fair one, to throw myself at yr feet is giving myself the highest blisse I know on earth. Oh, hasten ye minutes ! bring on the happy morning wherein to be ever her's will make me look down on thrones ! Dear Molly, I am tenderly, passionately, faithfully thine.

To the Same.

[*Aug.* 22,] 1707.

MADAM,

If my vigilance, and ten thousand wishes for your welfare and repose, could have any force, you last night slept in security, and had every good angel in your attendance. To have my thoughts ever fixed on you, to live in constant fear of every accident to which human life is liable, and to send up my hourly prayers to avert 'em from you ; I say, Madam, thus to think, and thus to suffer, is what

I do for her who is in pain at my approach, and calls all my tender sorrow impertinence. You are now before my eyes, my eyes that are ready to flow with tendernesse, but cannot give relief to my gushing heart, that dictates what I am now saying, and yearns to tell you all its akings. How art thou, oh my soul, stolen from thyself! how is all thy attention broken! My books are blank paper, and my friends intruders. I have no hope of quiet but from your pity: to grant it, would make more for your triumph. To give pain, is the tyranny, to make happy, the true empire, of beauty, If you would consider aright, you'de find an agreeable change, in dismissing the attendance of a slave, to receive the complaisance of a companion. I bear the former, in hopes of the latter condition. As I live in chains without murmuring at the power which inflicts them, so I could enjoy freedom without forgetting the mercy that gave it. Dear Mrs. Scurlock, the life which you bestow on me shall be no more my own. I am, your most devoted, most obedient ser'nt.

To the Same.

CHELSEA, *Aug.* 25, 1707.

MADAM,

I am observed, by a friend who is with me, in every gesture and motion I make. I have stole a moment, while he is in the next room, to tell the charmer and inspirer of my soul I am her devoted, obedient ser'nt.

To the Same.

Aug. 30, 1707.

MADAM,

I beg pardon that my paper is not [finer], but I am forc'd to write from a coffee-house where I am attending about business. There is a dirty crowd of busy faces all around me, talking politics and managing stocks; while all my ambition, all my wealth, is love! Love, which animates my heart, sweetens my humour, enlarges my soul, and affects every action of my life. 'Tis to my lovely charmer I owe, that many noble ideas are continually affixed to my words and actions; 'tis the naturall effect of that generous passion, to create some similitude in the admirer, of the object admired. Thus, my dear, am I every day to improve from so sweet a companion. Look up, my fair one, to that Heaven which made thee such, and join with me to implore its influence on our tender innocent hours, and beseech the Author of love, to blesse the rites he has ordain'd, and mingle with our happinesse a just sense of our transient condition, and a resignation to His will, which only can regulate our minds to a steddy endeavour to please [Him and] each other. I am for ever your faithful ser'nt.

To the Same.

Saturday Night [*Aug.* 30, 1707].

DEAR, LOVELY MRS. SCURLOCK,

I have been in very good company, where your unknown name, under the character of the woman

I lov'd best, has been often drunk ; so that I may say I am dead drunk for your sake, which is more than " I dye for you."

To the Same.

St. James's Coffee-house, *Sept.* 1, 1707.

Madam,

It is the hardest thing in the world to be in love, and yet attend businesse. As for me, all who speake to me find me out, and I must lock myself up, or other people will do it for me.

A gentleman asked me this morning, " What news from Lisbon ? " and I answered, " She's exquisitely handsome." Another desir'd to know " when I had been last at Hampton-court ? " I reply'd, " 'Twill be on Tuesday come se'nnight." Pr'ythee allow me at least to kiss your hand before that day, that my mind may be in some composure. Oh love !

> A thousand torments dwell about thee,
> Yet who would live, to live without thee ?

Methinks I could write a volume to you ; but all the language on earth would fail in saying how much, and with what disinterested passion, I am ever yours.

To the Same.

Sept. 2, 1707, *between One and Two.*

Dear Creature,

Ever since seven this morning I have been in company ; but have stole a moment, to pour out

the fullnesse of my thoughts, and complain to you of the interruption that impertinent amusement called businesse has given me, amidst my contemplation on the best of women, and the most agreeable object that ever charmed the heart of man. I am, dearest, lovelyest creature, eternally thine.

To the Same.

Sept. 5, 1707.

DEAR MADAM,

The pleasing hope with which my mind is possessed, is too delicate a touch of the soul to be explain'd, but it is founded on so solid and lasting motives, that I am sure it will actuate the behaviour of my whole life; for I do not entertain my imagination with those transports only which are rais'd by beauty, but fix it also on the satisfactions which flow from the reverence due to virtue. Thus I am not only allur'd by your person, but convinc'd by your life, that you are the most amiable of women. Let us go on, my lovely creature, to make our regards to each other, mutual and unchangeable, that, while the world around us is enchanted with the false satisfactions of vagrant desires, our persons may be shrines to each other, and sacred to conjugal faith, unreserv'd confidence, and heavenly society. While we live after this manner, angels will be so far from being our superiors, that they will be our attendants. Every good being guard my fairest, and conduct her to that bosome that pants to receive

her, and protect her from all the cares and vicissitudes of life with an eternal tenderness! I am ever most obligedly yrs.

To Mrs. Steele.

Sept. 9.

MADAM,

I hope your denying what I urg'd with so much passion, and which I complain'd of in too vehement a manner, has not been a grief to my tender companion; for, upon reflection this morning, I extremely approve your conduct, and take your behaviour to proceed from an inclination to come to my arms hallowed by your parent's blessing. I comply with your measures in bringing that happiness about, and shall behave myself as if only in the beginning of a sacred love made at the altar. I promise to myself sincere felicity in a woman that can sacrifice all desires to her duty; and I assure you, whatever appearance of care and disturbance you may observe now and then in my countenance, it is not the image of spleen, ill-nature, or dissatisfaction, but a strong propensity to make you the happiest of your sex; which I shall endeavour to do, rather by an industrious ambition to promote your fortune, than by a mere dalliance of your person only, to show a greater regard to the beauty than the wife. I begg of you to show my letters to no one living, but let us be contented with one another's thoughts upon our words and actions,

without the intervention of other people, who cannot judge of so delicate a circumstance as the commerce between man and wife. I am eternally yrs.

Pray write me a line.

To the Same.

Oct. 6, 1707.

DEAR CREATURE,

I write to tell you beforehand, that I am not in a very good humour; but all shall vanish at her sight whome Providence has given me for the banishment of care, and the improvement of delight to your most obliged husband, and most humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

Oct. 7, 1707.

MY DEAR,

Cousin Pen is much in the same condition we left her last night. I am going with great chearfulness and industry about my businesse to-day, in order to pass my time hereafter, without interruption, with the most agreeable creature living, which you are to the most obliged man living. Yr obedient husband.

To the Same.

Oct. 7, 1707.

MY LOV'D CREATURE,

I write this only to bid you good-night, and assure you of my diligence in the matter I told you of.

You may assure yourself I value you according to your merit, which is saying that you have my heart, by all the tyes of beauty, virtue, good-nature, and friendship. I find, by the progress I have made to-night, that I shall do my businesse effectually in two days time. Write me word you are in good-humour, which will be the highest pleasure to yr obliged husband.

I shall want some linnen from your house to-morrow.

To the Same.

Oct. 8, 1707.

My Dear Wife,

You were not, I am sure, awake so soon as I was for you, and desir'd the blessing of God upon you. After that first duty, my next is to let you know I am in health this morning, which I know you are sollicitous for. I believe it would not be amisse if, some time this afternoon, you tooke a coach or chair, and went to see an house next door to Lady Bulkley's towards St. James's-street, which is to be lett. I have a solid reason for quickening my diligence in all affairs of the world, which is, that you are my partaker in 'em, and will make me labour more than any incitation of ambition or wealth could do. After I have implor'd the help of Providence, I will have no motive to my actions but the love of the best creature living, to whom I am an obedient husband.

To the Same.

Monday Morning, Oct. 13, 1707.

DEAR MADAM,

This comes to beg yr pardon for every act of rebellion I have ever committed against you, and to subscribe myself in an error for being impatient of your kind concern in interesting yourself with so much affection [in] all which relates to me. I do not question but yr prudence will be a lasting honour and advantage to me in all the occurrences of my life; the chief happiness in it is, that I have the honour of being, your most obliged husband, and most humble servant.

To the Same.

Oct. 16, 1707.

DEAREST BEING ON EARTH,

Pardon me if you do not see me till eleven of clock, having met a schoolfellow from India, by whome I am to be inform'd in things this night which extreamely concern your obedient husband.

To the Same.

Eight of Clock, FOUNTAIN TAVERN, *Oct.* 22, 1707.

MY DEAR,

I beg of you not to be uneasy, for I have done a great deal of business to-day very successfully, and wait an hour or two about my Gazette. Your obliged husband.

To the Same.

Oct. 28, 1707.
CHARING CROSS, *almost Three in ye Afternoon.*

MY DEAR,

I have been detain'd all this morning solliciting some business between the Treasury and our office; and my boy slipping out of the way, I have not had any one to send that you might not stay dinner. Mr. Addison does not remove till to-morrow, therefore I cannot think of moving my goods out of his lodgings. I am come to a tavern alone to eat a stake, after which I shall return to the office, whether I desire you'de send Will. I am with the most tender affection, your obedient husband.

Send by Will the receipt.

A Prayer, written by Steele, soon after his Marriage to Mary Scurlock.

Oh, Almighty Lord God, who hast been pleased, out of thy righteous mercy and carefull providence, to place us two in the state of marriage, according to thy own institution and guidance of the first mortalls; grant, we beseech Thee, that we may live in that state with mutuall love, and endeavour to accommodate ourselves to each other's just desires and satisfactions; that we may be a mutuall help in all the vicissitudes of life through which Thou hast designed us to passe, in such manner as we may contribute to each other's virtue in this world, and salvation in that which is to come. Protect us, oh Lord most mighty; blesse us, oh mercifull Father;

and redeem us, oh holy Saviour. Guard our paths from errour, and keep our eyes from introducing wandring desires; but grant such peace and tranquillity of mind, and such a steady course of virtue and piety, that we may be at thy altar never-failing communicants; and, by a worthy receipt of the elements representing thy meritorious passion, we may through that be partakers of eternall life; which permit us to beseech of Thee in the words which thou hast taught us:

"Our Father, which art in Heaven: hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdome come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heav'n. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespasse against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdome, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

Mrs. Steele to her Husband.

Ah! Dick Steele, that I were but sure
Your love, like mine, would still endure;
That time, nor absence, which destroys
The cares of lovers, and there joys,
May never rob me of that part
Which you have given of your heart:
Others unenvi'd may possess
Whatever they think happiness.
Grant this, O God, my great request;
In his dear armes may I for ever rest!

To Mrs. Steele.

Dec. 22, 1707.

My dear, dear Wife,

I write to let you know I do not come home to dinner, being obliged to attend some business abroad, of which I shall give you an account (when I see you in the evening), as becomes yr dutiful and obedient husband.

To the Same.

Devil Tavern, Temple Bar, *Jan.* 3, 1708.

Dear Prue,

I have partly succeeded in my businesse to-day, and enclose two guineas as earnest of more. Dear Prue, I can't come home to dinner. I languish for yr welfare, and will never be a moment carelesse more. Your faithful husband.

Send me word you have received this.

To the Same.

Eleven at Night, Jan. 5, 1708.

Dear Prue,

I was going home two hours ago, but was met by Mr. Griffith, who has kept me ever since meeting me as he came from Mr. Lambert's. I will come within a pint of wine.

We drink yr health, and Mr. Griffith is yr ser'nt.

To the Same.

Jan. 14, 1708.

DEAR WIFE,

Mr. Edgecomb, Ned Ash, and Mr. Lumley, have desired me to sit an hour with them at the George in Pall-Mall, for which I desire your patience till twelve of clock, and that you will go to bed. I am ever thine.

To the Same.

Feb. 11, 1708.

DEAR WIFE,

Having your absolute commands to make an end to-day, I stay to dine with Mr. Tryon in order thereunto. I will be at home early, and desire you would make much of yrself, which is the great favour you can do yr affectionate husband, and dutifull ser'nt.

To the Same.

TENNIS-COURT COFFEE-HOUSE, *May* 5, 1708.

DEAR WIFE,

I hope I have done this day what will be pleasing to you; in the mean time shall lye this night at a barber's, one Legg, over against the Devile tavern at Charing-cross. I shall be able to confront the fools who wish me uneasy, and shall have the satisfaction to see thee chearfull and at ease.

If the printer's boy be at home, send him hither; and let Mrs. Todd send by the boy my night-gown, slippers, and clean linnen. You shall hear from me early in the morning.

To the Same.

May 19, 1708.
LORD SUNDERLAND'S OFFICE, *Eleven of Clock.*

DEAR PRUE,

I desire of you to gett the coach and yrself ready as soon as you can conveniently, and call for me here, from whence we will go and spend some time together in the fresh air in free conference. Let my best periwigg be put in the coach-box, and my new shoes, for it is a comfort to [be] well-dressed in agreeable company. You are vitall life to yr oblig'd, affectionate husband, and humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

May 25 [1708].
DUKE OF SUNDERLAND'S OFFICE, *almost One of Clock.*

DEAR PRUE,

I wish sleeping so long this morning, after I came out to work, may not do you harm. I design to dine at Court; after which I shall return to the office, and shall be glad of a visit there from so agreeable a lady as yourself. I am yrs unreservedly.

To the Same.

June 5, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

What you would have me do I know not. All that my fortune will compass you shall always enjoy, and have nobody near you that you do not like, except I am myself disapprov'd by you for being devotedly your obedient husband.

I shan't come home till night.

To the Same.

June 7, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

I inclose to you a guinea for your pocket. I dine with Lord Halifax.

I wish I knew how to court you into good-humour; for two or three quarrells more will dispatch me quite. If you have any love for me, believe I am always pursuing our mutuall good. Pray consider that all my little fortune is to [be] settled this month, and that I have inadvertently made myself liable to impatient people, who take all advantages. If you have [not] patience, I shall transact my business rashly, and lose a very great sum to quicken the time of yr being rid of all people you don't like. Yours ever.

To the Same.

Aug. 11, 1708.

DEAR WIFE,

I have ordered Richard to take your directions, whether you will have the chariot with two or four horses to sett you and your friend down at your house at Hampton-Court. Watts is gone over the water, and says she has your commands to follow in the stage-coach. I shall make it the business of my life to make you easy and happy. Consult yr cool thoughts, and you'le know that 'tis the glory of

a woman to be her husband's friend and companion, and not his sovereign director. I am, with truth, sincerity, and tendernesse, ever yr faithful husband.

Pray let the gardner put the place in order.

To the Same.

Aug. 12, 1708.

MADAM,

I have your letter, wherein you let me know, that the little dispute we have had is far from being a trouble to you; neverthelesse, I assure you, any disturbance between us is the greatest affliction to me imaginable. You talk of the judgement of the world; I shall never govern my actions by it, but by the rules of morality and right reason. I love you better than the light of my eyes, or the life-blood in my heart; but, when I have let you know that, you are also to understand, that neither my sight shall be so far inchanted, or my affection so much master of me, as to make me forgett our common interest. To attend my business as I ought, and improve my fortune, it is necessary that my time and my will should be under no direction but my own. Pray give my most humble service to Mrs. Binns. I write all this rather to explain my own thoughts to you than answer your letter distinctly. I enclose it to you, that, upon second thoughts, you may see the disrespectful manner in which you treat yr affectionate, faithful husband.

To the Same.

Aug. 13, 1708, *Four in the Afternoon.*

DEAR PRUE,

I send you some tea, which I doubt not but you will find is very good. I am yr very affectionate husband, and most humble ser'nt.

This is my second letter to-day.

To the Same.

Monday Morning, Aug. 16, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

I hope you have compos'd your mind, and are convinc'd that the methods I have taken were absolutely necessary for our mutuall good. I do assure you, there is not that thing on earth, except my honour, and that dignity which every man who lives in the world must preserve to himself, which I am not ready to sacrifice to yr will and inclination.

I din'd yesterday with my Lord Halifax, where the beauties in the garden were drunk to. I have settled a great deal of businesse within these few days, of all which I will give you an account when we meet. I am with the most sincere affection, yr oblig'd husband.

I sent you some tea on Friday last. My most humble service to Mrs. Binns.

To the Same.

Aug. 18, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

I have your letter ; and all the great severity you complain of is, that you have a husband who loves you better than his life, who has a great deal of troublesome businesse, out of which he removes the dearest thing alive. Yrs faithfully, in spite of yrself.

To the Same.

Aug. 23, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

I have your letter, and will take care to do as you desire in every particular of it. I hope, in the mean time, the cook's husband may go of errands till the servant comes down. I am, yr affectionate and faithfull husband.

My most humble service to Mrs. Binns.

To the Same.

Aug. 28, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

The afternoon coach shall bring you ten pounds. Your letter shews you are passionately in love with me. But we must take our portion of life as it runs without repining ; and I consider that good-nature, added to that beautifull form God has given you, would make an happinesse too great for human life. Yr most obliged husband, and most humble servant.

To the Same.

Aug. 28, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

I send you with this ten pounds, and should come to see you, as ungodly as you are, but that a mail is every moment expected, as you may gather from reading the last Gazette, which I enclose, and am, dear, dear Prue, sincerely yr fond husband.

To the Same.

Aug. 30, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

I sent ten pounds by the afternoon coach of Saturday, and hope you received it safe. The manner in which you write to me might perhaps to another look like neglect and want of love; but I will not understand it so, but take it to be only the uneasiness of a doting fondnesse, which cannot bear my absence without disdain.

I hope we shall never be so long asunder more, for it is not in your power to make me otherwise than yr affectionate, faithfull, and tender husband.

To the Same.

Sept. 8, 1708.
Two, Afternoon, SANDY-END.

DEAR PRUE,

Having reached London about eleven, dispatch'd what was further necessary after what papers Mr.

Addison had before sent to the presse, I am just now arriv'd here to dinner. You desire me to make submissions in my epistles, which I think is not to be insisted upon; but, if acknowledgements will satisfie you, I cannot but own to you, what you too well know, that you have a power almost sovereign over yr most enamoured husband, and humble servant.

Mr. Addison is yr humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

Sept. 13, 1708.

Dear Prue,

I write to you in obedience to what you order'd me; but there are not words to expresse the tendernesse I have for you. Love is too harsh a word for it; but if you knew how my heart akes when you speake an unkind word to me, and springs with joy when you smile upon me, I am sure you would place your glory rather in preserving my happiness like a good wife, than tormenting me like a peevish beauty. Good Prue, write me word you shall be overjoyed at my return to you and pity the aukward figure I make when I pretend to resist you, by complying always with the reasonable demands of yr enamoured husband.

P.S. I am Mrs. Binns's ser'nt.

To the Same.

Five in the Evening, Sept. 19, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

I send you seven pen'orth of walnutts at five a penny, which is the greatest proof I can give you at present of my being, with my whole heart, yrs.

The little horse comes back with the boy, who returns with him for me on Wednesday evening; in the mean time, I believe, it will be well that he runs in the Park.

I am Mrs. Binns's servant.

Since I writ this I came to the place where the boy was order'd with the horses; and, not finding him, sent this bearer, least you should be in fears, the boy not returning.

P.S. There are but 29 walnutts.

To the Same.

Sept. 20, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

If a servant I sent last night gott to Hampton-court, you receiv'd 29 walnutts and a letter from me. I inclose the Gazette, and am, with all my soul, yr passionate lover, and faithfull husband.

Since I writ the above, I have found half an hundred more of walnutts, which I send herewith.

My service to Binns.

To the Same.

Sept. 21, 1708.

DEAR, DEAR PRUE,

Your pretty letter, with so much good-nature and kindnesse, which I receiv'd yesterday, is a perfect pleasure to me. I am at present very much out of humour upon another account, Tryon having putt off the payment of my 800 l. which I ought to have receiv'd yesterday, till further time. But I hope, when Mr. Clay comes to town to-morrow, he will see me justified. I am, with the tenderest affection, ever yrs.

To the Same.

Monday, Seven at Night, Sept. 27, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

You see you are obey'd in every thing, and that I write over-night for the day following. I shall now in earnest, by Mr. Clay's good conduct, manage my businesse with that method as shall make me easy. The news, I am told, you had last night, of the taking of Lille, does not prove true ; but I hope we shall have it soon. I shall send by to-morrow's coach. I am, dear Prue, a little in drink, but at all times yr faithfull husband.

To the Same.

Sept. 28, 1708.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE, *between Six and Seven at Night.*

DEAR PRUE,

I thought it better to inclose this thus, than to direct so small a sum to you. I have but half as

much left in my pockett, but shall be much richer on Thursday morning.

My dear wife, it is not to be imagined by you the tender akings my heart is frequently touched with when I think of you.

Mr. Clay has shown himself a man of addresse in settling my affairs, in spite of the tricks and artifices of those I have to deal with.

I recommend thee, my heart's desire, to the good God who made thee that amiable creature thou art, to keep thee safe and happy. My service to your companion Binns. I am, yr devoted, affectionate husband, and humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

Half-hour after Ten, Sept. 28, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

It being three hours since I writ to you, I send this to assure you I am now going very soberly to bed, and that you shall be last thing in my thoughts to-night, as well as the first to-morrow morning. I am, with the utmost fondnesse, yr faithfull husband.

To the Same.

Oct. 2, 1708.

ST. JAMES'S COFFEE-HOUSE, *Eight in the Morning.*

DEAR PRUE,

Mr. Gervase going this morning to Hampton-court, I desire him to throw this over our wall. I have much difficulty to accomplish every thing necessary to be done here, which makes me fear I

cannot come till Tuesday noon. If it pleases God that I can be so happy as to live chearfully with thee, and in thy favour, it is the utmost of good can arrive to, dear Prue, eternally thine.

To the Same.

Oct. 5, 1708.
SECRETARY'S OFFICE, *near Ten at night.*

DEAR PRUE,

I got to town about six, found all things well. and have just dispatched the proof for to-morrow, I wish you a good night, and shall always keep myself in a capacity of taking the oaths that I am, with the strictest fidelity and love, yr enamoured husband, and humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

Thursday, Oct. 7, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

I fear I shall not be able to come out of town till Saturday morning. I am, my dear creature, thine for ever.

To the Same.

Oct. 8, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

This brings you a quarter of a pound of bohea, and as much of green tea, both which I hope you will find good. To-morrow morning your favourite, Mr. Addison, and I, shall sett out for Hampton-court; he to meet some great men there; I to see you, who am but what you make me. Yrs, with the utmost fondness.

To the Same.

Wednesday, Oct. 13, 1708,
HYDE PARK CORNER, *Eight in the Morning.*

DEAR PRUE,

The bearer is one I propose to be our footman. He is, as you see, very quiet, and fit for, what I often heard you call it, a thorow servant; besides which, he speakes the Welch tongue fluently. I believe he will be a proper fellow enough, for he liv'd a great while with one Dr. Price, an acquaintance of mine at Richmond. I hope he will be approv'd by you; if he is, the livery shall be fitted for his shape against the time that he and I can attend the chariot to bring Mrs. Binns and you to town, which shall be done with all suitable ceremony. In the mean time, I am busy about the main chance. I have order'd him to be here again this evening, except you direct otherwise. I hope I shall see you to-morrow. I am, with every dictate of my affections, and pulse of my heart, dear Prue, sincerely yrs.

To the Same.

Oct. 20, 1708.

DEAR WIFE,

I had yours last night, with an enclosed to my mother, which I do not design to deliver. You accuse me of unkindnesse for I cannot imagine what. If you want for any thing, it is that you will not supply yrself with it, for I very regularly send you wherewithall.

My Lord Chamberlain is expected this night in town, from whom I hope for an order for a very handsome apartment in Whitehall. As soon as I receive it, I will immediately remove into it, where I hope you will [be] pleas'd. I am sure it is the utmost of my ambition to make you so.

I am, yr faithfull, affectionate husband.

My mother has alter'd her mind about the mortgage. I think to come down to-morrow night to give you an account of everything ; in the meantime send by yr countryman two guineas.

To the Same.

Oct. 25, 1708.

Dear Prue,

If you do not hear of me before three to-morrow afternoon, believe I am too fuddled to take care to observe yr orders ; but, however, know me to be yr most faithfull, affectionate husband and ser'nt.

To the Same.

Almost Nine at Night, Oct. 29, 1708.

Dear Prue,

I begg the favour of you to take care to wrap yourself up very warm for yr journey to-morrow. The coachman has his orders ; and I have agreed with [him] to bring you to Kensington-square, and carry Mrs. Binns home, in hopes she will dispense with yr waiting upon her, and returning afterward to yr lodgings.

I shall take care to have yr lodgings fit for yr reception, and will never omit any thing in my power to make yr hours agreeable. Yr affectionate husband.

To the Same.

Nov. 13, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

I send you all the money I have, which I hope will bring you to town. Since you have an inclination to see the funerall, I have spoken for a place at the housekeeper's of the House of Lords to place you in, till I can gett a more convenient one for seeing the procession ; and I take it that it will be best to be in the Abbey itself, for which end you must come soon. I am ordered to stay here, or should come for you. Yrs, with all my soul.

The fleet is come in.

To the Same.

GARTER TAVERN, *Nov.* 16, 1708.

DEAR PRUE,

I am sorry I cannot come to sit an hour with you to-night, being detain'd by business with Mr. Huggins, which you know of. I have to-day been with Mr. Tryon, who does not now deny his having effects, but pretends to complain of hard usage in suing him. Within a day or two I doubt not but we shall have our money, which will be the introduction to that life we both pant after with so much earnestness. Yr oblig'd husband.

To the Same.

Nov. 17, 1708.

DEAR WIFE,

How can you add to my cares, by making so unjust complaints against me as in yrs of last night. I take all the pains imaginable to bring you home to ease and satisfaction, and made a great step in it yesternight, which I could not had I spent my time elsewhere than where I did. My dear, be chearful, and expect a good account of things this evening from, dear wife, yr most affectionate and most oblig'd husband.

To the Same.

Nov. 18, 1708.

DEAR WIFE,

I am going this morning into the city, to make my demand of the money long due to me. I shall hasten thence to you ; and am, with the tenderest love, ever yrs.

To the Same.

Nov. 26, 1708.

DEAR WIFE,

I am, by applying to my adversary, prepar'd for ending my present calamity ; but was deni'd by my friend. I am, dear creature, yr constant, faithfull lover, and obliged husband.

I am making it my businesse to find out Mr. Huggins, in order to withdraw his officer.

To the Same.

Nov. 30, 1708.

DEAR WIFE,

Be of good chear; for I find friendship among the lowest, when disappointed by the highest. I have call'd at Mr. Elderton's, to keep things at a stand till I come to him at ten of clock.

Dear creature, be chearful. God be yr comfort and yr protection. While that is so, and you are safe, nothing can disturb.

To the Same.

Dec. 6, 1708.

MY DEAR WIFE,

I will not defer telling you that there is a thing in agitation that will make me happy at once. Your rivall, A[ddiso]n, will be removed; and, if I can succeed him in his office, it will answer all purposes. This will be determined before to-morrow at noon. I cannot see Mr. Glover till six of clock. I am yr faithfull, loving husband.

Keep this to yrself. I'le come to you as soon as I have din'd.

To the Same.

Dec. 14, 1708,
Half-hour after Five of Clock.

DEAR PRUE,

Mr. Addison is just now gone to Lord Wharton; and I wait his return, to know my own next steps.

My heart is as much disturb'd as yours can be

on the same occasion; but this seasonable hope breaking in upon me will, I hope, cure all, and refresh our spirits. I wish you would come directly to the *garrett*; where you can, from time to time, hear from me what passes this evening.

I send this moment to my mother; & am, yours faithfully.

To the Same.

March 2, 1708–9.

My Dear Wife,

I inclose a guinea, lest you should want. I am resolved to do something effectually to-day with Tryon; therefore do not expect me at dinner.

My life is bound up in you. I'le be at home before six.

To the Same.

March 11, 1708–9.

Dear Prue,

I inclose five guineas, but cannot come home to dinner. Dear little woman, take care of thyself, and eat and drink chearfully.

To the Same.

March 21, 1708–9.

Dear Prue,

I send you this by the boy I have a mind to take, if you like him. Things go pretty well. I shall dine at court. If there [are] any letters, let the boy bring them to me thither, at the gentleman-usher's table. Yrs unreservedly, and faithfully.

To the Same.

[1708 ?]

DEAR PRUE,

I desire you to dresse yourself decently before you appear before me ; for I will [not] be so easily pleased as I have been, being now in a fair way to being a great man.

To the Same.

May 5, 1709.

DEAR WIFE,

I desire you would pluck up a good spirit if possible, and come in a chair, the boy with you, who shall find me at the coffee-house under Scotland-yard gate, from whence we will go see a convenient place. Do not be dejected, if you value the life and happiness of yr faithfull.

I inclose ten shillings.

To the Same.

May 5, 1709.

DEAR WIFE,

I cannot express to you the real sorrow the inequality of my behaviour gives me, when I reflect that I am in passion before the best of women. Dear Prue, forgive me : I will neglect nothing which may contribute to our ease together ; and you shall always find me your affectionate, faithfull, and tender husband.

To the Same.

May 5, 1709.

DEAR WIFE,

There is no doubt but we shall be easy and happy in a few days. My dear life, nothing troubles me sorely, but the affront that insufferable brute has putt upon you, which I shall find ways to make her repent. I am, my dear creature, entirely yrs.

You shall hear from me in the morning.

To the Same.

May 7, 1709.

DEAR PRUE,

I am just drinking a pint of wine, and will come home forthwith. I am with Mr. Elliott, settling things. Yrs ever, ever.

To the Same.

[1709 ?]

MY DEAR,

Upon my honour and salvation I hide nothing. Yr generous declaration towards me makes me melt into tears. Mr. Boyle has desired me to dine with him, which at this time I must not deny. As soon as I have dined I will come to you. Pray send not thither. Dear Prue, talk thus and govern. Yrs.

Pray be carefull of Lugger, etc. Tell Mr. Nutt I shall call upon him wherever he is in ye evening, but do not enter into any discourse with him, for reasons which I will tell you.

To the Same.

FROM MR. NUTT'S, *July* 25, 1709.

DEAR PRUE,

I have finished the Gazette at the office ; and am here ending the other business, in order to have the evening with my wife and mistresse Prue. Here is next door a fellow that makes old wiggs new ; therefore pray send both mine in the bed-chamber, by this boy, to yr loving, devoted, obedient husband.

To the Same.

July 28, 1709.

DEAR PRUE,

I inclose two guineas, and will come home exactly at seven. Yrs tenderly.

To the Same.

Sept. 25, 1709.

DEAR PRUE,

I send this, to put thy tenderness at rest ; and acquaint you, that Mr. Margate had been so friendly as to take effectuall care before he saw me. I am, yrs eternally.

To the Same.

[1709 ?]

Whether I deserve it or not, I humbly desire you would smile upon me when I come into yr presence. I wait for yr answer, who am yrs tenderly.

To the Same.

[1709 ?]

Pray, Prue, look a little dressed, and be beautifull, or else everybody else will be entertained but the entertainer; but, if you please, you can outshine the whole company on any costly lustre. Come in good humour. Yrs.

To the Same.

Nov. 20, 1709.

DEAR WIFE,

I have been in great pain of body and mind since I came out. You are extremely cruell to a generous nature, which has a tendernesse for you that renders your least dishumour insupportably afflicting. After short starts of passion, not to be inclined to reconciliation, is what is against all rules of Christianity and justice. When I come home, I begg to be kindly received, or this will have as ill an effect upon my fortune, as on my mind and body.

To the Same.

Feb. 15, 1709–10.

DEAR WIFE,

I believe I am the first that ever rejoiced at the flight of one he loved. After I was done writing, I went up to visit my sick wife, and found she was herself gone a-visiting. I wish you had given me the pleasure of knowing you were so well, it would have giv'n what I was writing a more lively turn. I am, yr affectionate, tender, observant, and indulgent husband.

To the Same.

April 7, 1710.

DEAR PRUE,

I inclose to you a receipt for the saucepan and spoon, and a note of 23 l. of Lewis's, which will make up the 50 l. I promised for yr ensuing occasion.

I know no happinesse in this life in any degree comparable to the pleasure I have in your person and society; I only begg of you to add to yr other charms, a fearfulnesse to see a man that loves you in pain and uneasinesse, to make me as happy as it is possible to be in this life. Rising a little in a morning, and being disposed to a chearfulnesse [torn], would not be amisse. I am yr most affectionate husband, and obedient servant.

There are papers in the parlour window, dated from Hamburgh and other places, wh I want.

To the Same.

Wednesday, Aug. 9, 1710.
BERRY STREET, *Half-hour after Six.*

DEAR PRUE,

Thou art such a foolish tender thing, that there is no living with thee.

I have broke my rest last night, because I knew you would be such a fool as not to sleep. Pray come home by this morning's coach, if you are impatient: but, if you are not here before noon, I will come down to you in the evening; but I must make visits this morning, to hear what is doing. Yours ever.

To the Same.

COCKPIT, *Aug.* 9, 1710.

DEAR PRUE,

I cannot possibly come, expecting orders here, which I must overlook, and having not half done my other businesse at the Savoy.

Dear creature, come in the morning coach ; and, if I can, I will return wth you in the evening. Pray wrap yrself very warm. Yours ever.

To the Same.

Sept. 30 [1710].
From the Pier One in the Morning.

DEAR PRUE,

I am very sleepy and tir'd, but could [not] think of closing my eyes till I had told you I am, dearest creature, yr most affectionate and faithfull husband.

To the Same.

Oct. 12, 1710.

DEAR PRUE,

I desire you to go to dinner. Be chearful and beautifull, and I will come to you to yr mother's between six and seven this evening. Faithfully yours.

To the Same.

June 2, 1711.

DEAR PRUE,

I cannot come home to dinner. I dine with Tonson, at an ordinary near the Temple, with

Mr. Addison and another gentleman. A gentleman met me to-day, and acquainted me that John had been with him to be hired, so that you will be rid of him, and I will pay him when I come home. I would have you go out and divert yrself, and believe I love you better than life. Yours.

I write from Mr. Edward Lawrence's, whose sister would be glad of yr company.

To the Same.

Jan. 22, 1712.

DEAR PRUE,

Give me till ten of clock to-morrow without dunning for your payments; for Diggle insists upon paying butcher Gibbs, and settling two or three things, before my domestick comes. Yours.

To the Same.

July 15, 1712.

DEAR PRUE,

I thank you for your kind billet. The nurse shall have money this week. I saw your son *Dick*; but he is a peevish chit. You cannot conceive how pleased I am that I shall have the prettyest house to receive the prettyest woman, who is the darling of.

To the Same.

July 24, 1712.

DEAR CREATURE,

All you desire shall be done. I begg of you to compose yourself; for nothing else can [make]

happy one that doats on you so much that he cannot hide it, though he heartily wishes he could. Yours unchangeably.

To the Same.

Sept. 17, 1712,
HAMPTON COURT, *Thursday Noon.*

DEAREST WIFE,

The finest woman in nature should not detain me an hour from you; but you must sometimes suffer the rivalship of the wisest men. Lord Halifax and Sommers leave this place after dinner; and I go to Watford, to speake with the Solicitor-general, and from thence come directly to Bloomsbury-square. Yrs faithfully.

To the Same.

Nov. 18, 1712.

DEAR PRUE,

I am come from a committee where I have [been] chairman, and drank too much. I have the headach, and should be glad you would come to me in good-humour, which would always banish any uneasiness of temper from, dear Prue, yr fond fool of a husband.

To the Same.

March 28, 1713.

DEAR PRUE,

I will do everything you desire your own way. Yrs ever.

To the Same.

TONSON'S, *June* 6, 1713.

DEAR PRUE,

I shall not come home to dinner ; but, if you will call here at six of clock, we will take the air together. Yours more than you can imagine, or I expresse.

To the Same.

June 20, 1713.

DEAR PRUE,

To keep things in order from that quarter, I am gone to Highgate to dinner ; have been pretty successful this morning. Send for *Queer-ones* to keep you company. At night we will talk over all, Your faithfull, affectionate husband.

Since the above, I have received a message from Mr. Addison, who put off the meeting with Mr. Ashurst, and has engaged me to meet some Whig lords. In the evening, at six, you shall know where I am.

To the Same.

July 1, 1713.

DEAR PRUE,

If you please to be in readinesse about one of clock, I will send you word where I shall be, to go with you to Mr. Hoole's to see the Entrey. I have discharged Hugh, and have his receipt. Yr most affectionate, faithfull husband.

I have given his black cloaths, for I will never strip a servant.

To the Same.

July 10, 1713.

DEAR PRUE,

This is only to acquaint you that I have almost finished my vexations ; and I shall, from to-morrow, be in a regular and methodicall way.

You are my pride, my pleasure, my ambition, and all that is agreeable to yr affectionate and faithfull husband.

To the Same.

July 13, 1713.

DEAR TYRANT,

I have seen Carpenter this morning, and he says it is all one to him, we may keep the woman in the house ; so that what you have to do, is only to get linnen, &c. bundled up against evening. You shall hear from me again about five of clock. I begg of you to govern me as gently as you can, for you have full power over yr affectionate, constant, obedient husband.

To the Same.

July 22, 1713.

I write because I hear you give yourself up to lamentation. You have, indeed, no cause for it ; and I beseech you to repose the confidence in me, which is deserved from you by yr affectionate and tender husband.

To the Same.

[1713.]

DEAR PRUE,

I inclose to you yr letter, and think it needlesse to make any other answer than what is a very true one to yr own knowledge. I never deny'd you anything in my power to give or do. When I had not money, I have given promises, to keep up yr spirits and keep you in good humour.

I do not pretend to answer to the severe things you say to me, because I never did nor ever will mean any thing but pleasing you, therefore I hope you will continue to love yr affectionate and obedient husband.

To the Same.

BLOOMSBURY-SQUARE, *Dec.* 24, 1713.

DEAR PRUE,

I dine with Lord Halifax, and shall be at home half-hour after six. For thee I dye, for thee I languish.

To the Same.

Jan. 27, 1713–14.

DEAR PRUE,

I repeat that I will do in all as you have desired, so help me God.

I will be at Tonson's all the evening.

To the Same.

March 11, 1713–14.

DEAR PRUE,

I send this to let you know, that Ld Halifax would not let me go to the House, but thought it would be better to have the first attack made in my absence. Mr. Foley was the gentleman who did me that honour; but they could not bring it to bear so far as to obtain an order for my attending in my place, or any thing else to my disadvantage than that all pamphlets are to come on Saturday. Lord Halifax, in the House of Lords, told the ministry, that he believed, if they would recommend the Crisis to her Ma^tie's perusall, she would think quite otherwise of the book than they do.

I think they have begun very unhappily and ungracefully against me, and doubt not but God will turn their malice to the advantage of the innocent. Yr faithfull husband, and humble servant.

To the Same.

BOW-STREET, *March* 12, 1713–14.

DEAR PRUE,

I am going to Mr. Walpole's, to meet some friends. There is nothing can arise to me which ought to afflict you; therefore, pray be a Roman lady, and assume a courage equall to your goodness. The Q—n is very ill. Yr faithfull, very chearful husband.

Do not mention, if you see Harris, the businesse of the Q——.

To the Same.

Easter Sunday, March 28, 1714.

DEAR PRUE,

I write this to acquaint you that I am going to Dr. West's chapel.

I cannot learn any thing of our great business more than that it is a-doing, and my chief creditor seems easy in expectation of his money that way.

I am going this morning to a very solemn work, and invoke Almighty God to blesse you and your little ones, beseeching him to spare me a little life to acquit myself to you and them, whome of all the world I have hitherto least endeavoured to serve. But you, and Betty, and Dick, and Eugene, and Molly, shall be henceforth my principal cares next to the keeping a good conscience. Yrs, good Prue.

Service to Mrs. Keck.

To the Same.

March 30, 1714.

DEAR PRUE,

I sit down to give you some account of our affairs. The affair with Ashurst, he says, is in great forwardnesse; but I cannot dive into the secret by what hands I am to be obliged. I had the good fortune to be with Mr. Cadogan alone yesterday after I had dined with him. His discourse was much to my satisfaction, but I cannot write it; therefore, if you please to come hither in the evening, between seven and eight, we will talk all over.

After I had been with Cadogan till six in the evening, he carryed me with him to a ball, where [were] his mother, sister, and several relations, among whome Lady Blundell. I did not come home till three in the morning, which is the reason that you here from me so late as now, at twelve of clock. It is a mighty silly thing for you and I to be melancholy; but let us chear one another, and be a comfort to each other. According to the situation of affairs, nothing but Divine Providence can prevent a civil war within a few years; and against such disasters there can be no remedy but preparing our minds for the incidents we are to meet with, with chearfulnesse. Dear wife, I honour, I love, I doat on you.

To the Same.

May 21, 1714.

DR PRUE,

I send this, to let you know that we do not go out of town to-night. I am yr affectionate, faithfull husband.

Pray pardon impatiencies, which have their foundation in care and solicitude for you, and vexation that I have not been so just as to prefer my family to all the world.

To the Same.

BLOOMSBURY-SQUARE, *June* 24, 1714.

DEAR PRUE,

Lord Wharton, whome I met at the House, engaged me at the Kitt-katt at three of clock; so

that, had I come home, I should have had time but just to come back again.

I will wait on you after six. Yrs, most obediently.

To the Same.

CHARING-CROSS, *July* 15, 1714.

DEAR PRUE,

Mr. Walpole going out of town to-morrow, I am oblig'd to dine where he does, to get an opportunity of speaking to him. I am, dear Prue, yr most affectionate, obedient husband.

To the Same.

Aug. 4, 1714.
THATCHED-HOUSE, ST. JAMES'S-STREET.

DEAR PRUE,

I have been loaded with compliments from the Regents, and assured of something immediately, but have not heard wt answer Phillips brings from Scott. I desire you to send me a guinnea. I shall have cash in the morning. I wait here to speak with Cadogan, with whome I would explain the posture of my affairs more earnestly. Faithfully yours.

To the Same.

Aug. 6, 1714.

DEAR PRUE,

I was obliged to borrow of Mr. Minshull money to pay Scott 50 l.

He obliged me to dine with him, after which I

must go to Mr. Moore, and after that to Mr. Ashurst, and after that to the delight of my eyes, yr dear self.

To the Same.

St. James's, *Aug.* 15, 1714.

Dear Prue,

I have been with Cadogan, who gives me great hopes of successe in the patent for farthings. Baron Bothmar dines with him, and he will have me be there.

If I do not deserve good-fortune, I hope being join'd to you and yours will be, in the sight of Heaven, a motive for blessing me, who, with God's grace, shall grow better. Yr obedient husband.

To the Same.

[*Ladies Library.*]

[1715.]

Madam,

If great obligations received are just motives for addresses of this kind, you have an unquestionable pretension to my acknowledgments, who have condescended to give me your very self. I can make no return for so inestimable a favour, but in acknowledging the generosity of the giver. To have either wealth, wit, or beauty, is generally a temptation to a woman to put an unreasonable value upon herself; but with all these, in a degree which drew upon you the addresses of men of the amplest fortunes, you bestowed your person where you could have no

expectations but from the gratitude of the receiver, though you knew he could exert that gratitude in no other returns but esteem and love. For which must I first thank you? for what you have denied yourself, or for what you have bestowed on me?

I owe to you, that for my sake you have overlooked the prospect of living in pomp and plenty, and I have not been circumspect enough to preserve you from care and sorrow. I will not dwell upon this particular; you are so good a wife, that I know you think I rob you of more than I can give, when I say any thing in your favour to my own disadvantage.

Whoever should see, or hear you, would think it were worth leaving all the world for you; while I, habitually possessed of that happiness, have been throwing away impotent endeavours for the rest of mankind, to the neglect of her for whom any other man, in his senses, would be apt to sacrifice every thing else.

I know not by what unreasonable prepossession it is, but methinks there must be something austere to give authority to wisdom; and I cannot account for having only rallied many seasonable sentiments of yours, but that you are too beautiful to appear judicious.

One may grow fond, but not wise, from what is said by so lovely a counsellor. Hard fate, that you have been lessened by your perfections, and lost power by your charms!

That ingenuous spirit in all your behaviour, that

ar grace in your words and actions, has for ·ven years only inspired admiration and love ; ·perience has taught me, the best counsel I .ave received has been pronounced by the and softest lips, and convinced me that I am blest with a wise friend, as well as a charming ss.

.r mind shall no longer suffer by your person ; .all your eyes, for the future, dazzle me into iness towards your understanding. I rejoice public occasion to shew my esteem for you ; .ust do you the justice to say, that there can virtue represented in all this Collection for nale world, which I have not known you exert, as the opportunities of your fortune have vou leave. Forgive me, that my heart over- with love and gratitude for daily instances of ›rudent œconomy, the just disposition you of your little affairs, your chearfulness in :h of them, your prudent forbearance of any ons that they might have needed less vigilance u disposed of your fortune suitably ; in short the arguments you every day give me of a ›us and sincere affection.

impossible for me to look back on many evils .ins which I have suffered since we came ·r, without a pleasure which is not to be ex- :, from the proofs I have had, in those ·stances, of your unwearied goodness. How as your tenderness removed pain from my ad ! how often anguish from my afflicted

heart! With how skilful patience have I known you comply with the vain projects which pain has suggested, to have an aching limb removed by journeying from one side of a room to another! how often, the next instant, travelled the same ground again, without telling your patient it was to no purpose to change his situation! If there are such beings as guardian angels, thus are they employed. I will no more believe one of them more good in its inclinations, than I can conceive it more charming in its form, than my wife.

But I offend, and forget that what I say to you is to appear in public. You are so great a lover of home, that I know it will be irksome to you to go into the world even in an applause. I will end this without so much as mentioning your little flock, or your own amiable figure at the head of it. That I think them preferable to all other children, I know is the effect of passion and instinct; that I believe you the best of wives, I know proceeds from experience and reason. I am, Madam, your most obliged husband, and most obedient, humble servant.

To the Same.

Jan. 27, 1715.

DEAR, DEAREST PRUE,

I hope this will find you well, as I am at this present writing. I send Wilmot to know how you do only, and to bring the book concerning the law of elections; or, what is better, let him bring the green cases with him. If you have a letter

with a note of Warner's, send it hither, and I will have it of his neighbour, Mr. Jessop. I write now among dancing, singing, hooping, hallowing, and drinking. I think I shall succeed. My dear, I love you to death.

If the bill is not come, and you have a guinnea or two, send them ; for I would not borrow till my bill comes, which will certainly be next arrival of the post to York.

To the Same.

Jan. 28, 1714–15.
Borrowbridge, *Twelve at Night.*

Dear Prue,

I obey your directions exactly, and avoid drinking, and every thing else that might give you any trouble. The precept for electing members for this place came hither to-day, and the election is to be on Wednesday. It looks with a good face on my side. I take the opportunity of writing by the gentleman who keeps the Black Man. He has very much pleased [me] with an account that you had a river at the end of your garden. There will be there, I doubt not, a thousand prayers offered up, to grant me discretion, and the care of this world. You and yours, I fear, will make me covetous ; I am sure you have made me value wealth much more than I ever thought I should : but indeed I have a reason which makes it worth the pursuit : it will make me more agreeable to you. I am indeed, Prue, intirely yours.

I hope Nanny does not misbehave so as to disturb yr tranquillity.

If the post should this night not bring me money, I find I can have money in the country, and draw a bill on Mr. Castleman at London.

To Lady Steele.

SPEAKER'S CHAMBERS, *Aug.* 14, 1715.

DEAR PRUE,

I write this before I go to Ld Marleborough's, to let you know that there was no one at the Treasury but Kelsey, with whome Welsted left the order, and he is to be at the Treasury again to-morrow between two and three : when, without doubt, the money will be payd. I have no hopes from that, or any thing else, but by dint of riches to get the government of yr Ladyship. Yours.

To the Same.

Jan. 10, 1715–16.

DEAR PRUE,

I have that in my pockett which within few days will be a great sum of money, besides what is growing at the play-house. I prefer your ease to all things. I begg of you to send for coals, and all things necessary for this week, and keep us only to the end of it out of your abundance ; and I shall ever add to it hereafter, instead of attempting to diminish it. I cannot indeed get money immediately without appearing most scandalously indigent, which I would avoid for the future. Ever yrs.

To the Same.

St. James's-street, *Aug.* 9, 1716.

Dear Prue,

You may observe, in those excellent books which your polite cousin reads to you, that necessaries are often wanting to the heroes and heroines for want of storing their portmanteaus with proper materials.

The bearer brings you, with this, a case of instruments for eating and drinking, that may be upon the road both of ornament and use to, Madam, yr obedient husband.

To the Same.

[*Nov.* 26, 1716.]

Dear Prue,

I hope this will find you safe at Carmarthen, and that you find all things easy there. There is nothing extraordinary has occurred here. Your daughter Betty was very well yesterday: I made her be brought out as I rid by.

I have been much on horseback to prepare for my journey, for which I expect orders on Monday next out of Scotland. This is the ninth day with my dear Molly in the small-pox; she has much in the body, little in the face: they are, they say, very kindly. Nurse Jervase, with her duty, recommends herself to you for her extraordinary care and diligence about your child. Mrs. Evans and her husband deserve very well of us. I am, with the

tenderest love, yr most obedient husband, and most humble servant.

My most humble service to the widow, and all the family.

To the Same.

Nov. 29, 1716.

DEAR PRUE,

I am extremely obliged to you for your letter on the reverse of my cousin's. Your indisposition is a very great grief to me. I desire you to use brandy to bath your head, tille you hear Dr. Garth's advice by next post. Betty is very well, and Molly up, and has this day taken physick, which shall be continued as much as proper, and at proper distances. I have a great packet to answer from Scotland, of which you shall have a further account in my next. I am devotedly yours.

To the Same.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET, *Dec.* 11, 1716.

DEAR PRUE,

I have received yours, with the enclosed bill for fifty pounds. I earnestly intreat you not to excruciate your spirit with what you ought to overlook and despise. I will write to you at large on Thursday about all matters, especially the method of my journey. I am, dear woman, entirely yours.

To the Same.

[undated.]

DEAREST PRUE,

This is only to ask how you do. I am Yr-Betty-Dick-Eugene-Molly's humble servant.

To the Same.

Dec. 13, 1716.

MY DEAR PRUE,

Mrs. Secretary Bevans has acquainted me, by the 7th instant, that you are well, and very much my friend and servant. Mrs. Evans went to see Betty yesterday, who, she says, is grown a very fine lady. Moll sate by me a little as I was writing yesterday; she will not be at all marked, but is a dear child. Eugene is grown a very lively gentleman. After all this news, which takes in all the compass of whatever you care for, you will not much regard politicks if I should write any. But, it seems, my Lord Townshend is out, and Stanhope and Methuen the two secretaries for England, and Duke Roxborough made a third secretary for Scotland; for which place I intend to sett out this day, with an opportunity of a gentleman's coach going down. I am, dear Prue, yr most affectionate, obedient, languishing relict.

The machine is almost ready.

To the Same.

Dec. 18, 1716.

DEAR PRUE,

Whether I love you because you are the mother of the children, or them because you are their mother, I know not; but I am sure I am growing a very covetous creature for the sake of both of you. I am making haste to Scotland; have only a small affair, which I will acquaint you with in my next, and am, intirely yours.

To the Same.

ST. JAMES'S-STREET, *Dec.* 20, 1716.

DEAR PRUE,

Mrs. Secretary writes me word you have a curiosity to know what bustle it was that you heard of at the playhouse. It was occasioned by a gentleman's coming in very rough, in a riding-habit; and the sentry enquiring of him where he was going, as he offered to passe into a box, he told him, if he opposed his passage he would shoot him through the head. The souldiour [soldier] was the more alarmed at him, and persisted to deny him entrance; at which the stranger pulled out a pistol, and shot the man in the neck. He was seized, and severall pistols found about him, and proves one Mr. Freeman, a madman. The house was in a very great uproar, crying out *The Prince!* who only appeared indifferent and composed.

I long to be gone from hence. The children are all well. I am, dear Prue, ever thine.

Your man Sam owes me three-pence, which must be deducted in the account between you and me; therefore, pray take care to get it in, or stop it.

To the Same.

St. James's-street, *Dec.* 28, 1716.

Dearest Prue,

It is matter of gain, not matter of gallantry, keeps me here thus long. I hope, within a post or two, to give an account of [a] thing that will bring us a great sum of money.

All my endeavours and thoughts tend only to extricate my condition, and have no debt but that to a good wife and a few dear innocents. I am, dear Prue, eternally thine.

The King leaves Hanover the 4th of Jan: our stile.

To the Same.

St. James's-street, *Jan.* 1, 1716–17.

Dear, dear Prue,

I wish you from my soul an happy new year, and many, very different from what we have hitherto had. In order thereunto, I have taken a resolution, which, by the blessing of God, I will stedfastly keep, to make my children partners with me in all my future gain, in the manner I have before described to you. That you may be convinced of

this happy change, you shall be yourself the keeper of what I lay up for them by quarterly portions from this day. I am, with the tenderest affection, yr faithfull husband, and most humble servant.

Yr children are all well.

To the Same.

Jan. 17, 1716–17.

DEAR PRUE,

I have yours on a leaf of the widow's. If you knew how deeply it touches me, you would not write in such a scornfull and unkind stile to, Madam, yr most affectionate, obedient husband.

To the Same.

[undated.]

DEAR PRUE,

I have yours, and, if I have ever offended you, am heartily sorry for it, and begg your pardon. As to the next circumstance, the world is all alike every where ; and I know no occasion for expecting great friendship, and disinterested conduct ; but maintain a discreet and distant correspondence, at the same time always ready to do what good one can to relations, without thinking of what return they will make. I do, as you advise, court and converse with men able and willing to serve me. But, after this, you grow very pleasant, and talk of 800 l. Please to shew me in your next how you make out such a demand upon me, and you shall have my serious answer to it. Your words are, " the full

800 l. you owe me." You advise me to take care of my soul: I do not [know] what you can think of yours, when you have and do with-hold from me your body. I observe what you say of cousin Alexander, and shall be glad of his correspondence. I have not yet had any money as a commissioner; but shall next week, and then will pay Betty's schooling, &c. Yr most obedient, humble husband and servant.

I inclose to you a letter from Morgan Davies, with my answer on the back. I believe you had better conceal that. I send you his letter; you may be sure he shall have no consent of mine separate from yours, for you rule me entirely.

To the Same.

Feb. 5, 1716–17.

DEAR PRUE,

I write without having any thing new to say. I am going to be very easy, God be thanked, in my affairs; to throw of all hangers-on, put my debts in a regular way of payment, which I cannot immediately discharge; and try to behave myself with the utmost circumspection and prudence in all the duties of life, especially of being, dear Prue, yr most obliged husband, and obedient, humble servant.

To the Same.

Feb. 16, 1716–17.

DEAR PRUE,

Sober or not, I am ever yours.

To the Same.

Feb. 23, 1716–17.

DEAR PRUE,

I have not anything particular to say to-night, but that I am informed there will be, within a few days, further changes at court. Your children are all very well. I wait with great impatience for the receipt of my money. There is forfeited money in town, but it is not yet in the Exchequer. I am, dear Prue, ever yours.

To the Same.

Feb. 28, 1716–17.

DEAR PRUE,

I am very well pleased with the behaviour of David at Oxford, who has render'd himself very agreeable to all the Whig world, on a very proper occasion, at Oxon. He spoke contemptibly of the Pretender in a public speech, and the Proctor thought fitt to reprove him thereupon. The Bishop of Bangor takes occasion to espouse him in this juncture.

Your daughter Moll is noisy, Betty very grave, and Eugene very strong and lusty. We are not yet paid a farthing ; when we are, I shall send you down a receipt for Betty's scooling. Ever yrs.

To the Same.

March 2, 1716–17.

DEAR PRUE,

I usually write to you the first thing I do on a post-day; but to-day company came in, and made me neglect it. Afterwards I was called abroad; then came home, and Budgell, Benson, and Fuller came in upon me to dinner. The two last stay'd till the evening; and Fuller carryed me with him to the play, from whence I am now returned home. Your friend Keck was the finest, gayest figure there, and Captain Ferrers gallantly attending behind her. All yr family is well. Good-night. I am, dear Prue, ever thine.

To the Same.

[undated.]

MY DEAREST PRUE, AND BELOVED WIFE, &c.,

I have yours of the 7th instant, which turns wholly upon my taking care of my health, and advice to forbear embarking too deeply in publick matters, which you enforce by reminding me of the ingratitude I have met with. I have as quick sense of the ill-treatment I have received as is consistent with keeping up my own spirit and good humour. Whenever I am a malcontent, I will take care not to be a gloomy one, but hope to keep some stings of wit and humour in my own defence. I am talking to my wife, and therefore may speake my heart and the vanity of it. I know, and you are witness

that I have served the Royall Family with an unreservedness due only to Heaven, and I am now (I thank my brother Whiggs) not possessed of twenty shillings from the favour of the Court. The Playhouse it had been barbarity to deny at the player's request, and therefore I do not allow it a favour. But I banish the very memory of these things, nor will I expect any thing but what I must strike out of myself. By Tuesday's post I think I shall be able to guesse when I shall leave the town, and turn all my thoughts to finish my comedy. You will find I have got so much constancy and fortitude as to live my own way (within the rules of good-breeding and decency) where-ever I am ; for I will not sacrifice yr husband, and the father of the poor babes, to any one's humour in the world. But to provide for, and do you good, is all my ambition.

I have a list of 21 leases for the setting out 199 l. 8 s. *per ann.* I have not yet heard of Mr. Phillips. I am, dear Prue, ever yours.

To the Same.

HAMPTON-COURT, *March* 16, 1716–17.

DEAR PRUE,

If you have written any thing to me which I should have received last night, I begg your pardon that I cannot answer till the next post. The House of Commons will be very busie the next week ; and I had many things, publick and private, for which I wanted four-and-twenty hours retirement, and therefore came to visit your son. I came out of

town yesterday, being Friday, and shall return to-morrow. Your son, at the present writing, is mighty well employed, in tumbling on the floor of the room, and sweeping the sand with a feather. He grows a most delightfull child, and very full of play and spiritt. He is also a very great scholar: he can read his Primer; and I have brought down my Virgil. He makes most shrewd remarks upon the pictures. We are very intimate friends and play-fellows. He begins to be very ragged; and I hope I shall be pardoned if I equip him with new cloaths and frocks, or what Mrs. Evans and I shall think for his service. I am, dear Prue, ever yours.

To the Same.

[undated.]

DEAR PRUE,

Yours of the 18th lyes before me; and I am convinced that *generous* in my carriage should rather be, what you call it, *thoughtlesse*. As for the company I am to meet with, I shall maintain a general complaisance, and think the sincerity of speaking all one thinks a great insult and injury towards the rest of the world. I assure you, we will have no quarrels on that score; for, as I owe every body civility, so I owe you to go on yr own way; nor will I debate with you on these subjects, but proceed in my own way. To shew you that I am grown a very hard-hearted fellow, and fitt for this world, Mrs. Long has been arrested, and I have, upon her application, refused to concern myself in her affairs. It was,

I think, a little confident in her to ask it of me ; and, in such cases, I think I may be as bold to deny unreasonable things, as they are to ask them. The Lords of the Treasury have ordered us some money, and I shall husband it to the best advantage, to keep above this ill-natured world ; but it is a terrible circumstance to have one's money due to others before it comes into one's own hands.

Dick Philips has been here to-day ; and, after we had dined, I executed the leases. I am highly pleased and satisfied with your conduct, and think you come up to the description in the Proverbs of the good woman, of whom it is said, that her husband shall be honoured from her character. I do assure you, I am not ashamed to tell you, that I submit my conduct to the imitation of yours, and shall take you with me in all matters of concern. You are to know, that I have been casting about how to turn a kind inclination towards me at present into what is solid. There is an estate forfeited to the King, of one hundred a year, by one who dyed for murder. It is a thing I have come to the knowledge of by-the-bye ; and believe I shall have a grant of it, to help me out of the inconveniencies my zeal brought upon me, and I have not yet recovered. One does not know what fate any letter may meet with ; therefore I can never find in my heart to commit secrets to paper. But take it for granted, I shall hereafter shew very little romance in the temper and conduct of, dear Prue, yr most affectionate husband, and most obedient servant.

To the Same.

[undated.]

DEAR PRUE,

I have yours, wherein you mention Fuller, and the account you have that he shewed an insolent joy at his wife's death. I do not set up to excuse his conduct towards his wife, but shall take care of mine towards my own.

You tell me you want a little flattery from me. I assure you I know no one who deserves so much commendation, and to whom saying the best things would be so little like flattery, as yrself. The thing speaks itself, considering you as a very handsome woman, that loves retirement, one who does not want wit, and yet is extremely sincere ; and so I could go through all the vices which attend the good qualities of other people, of which you are exempt. But, indeed, tho' you have every perfection, you have one extravagant fault, which almost frustrates the good in you to me, and that is, that you do not love to dresse, to appear, to shine out, even at my request, and to make me proud of you, or rather to indulge the pride I have that you are mine. This is all I wish changed in you, which I hope you will bring about, and condescend to be, what nature made you, the most beauteous and most agreeable of your sex, at the instance of, dear Prue, yr most affectionate, obsequious husband.

A quarter of Molly's schooling is paid.

The children are perfectly well.

To the Same.

March 26, 1717.

My dearest Prue,

I have received yours, wherein you give me the sensible affliction of letting me know of the continuall pain in your head. I could not meet with necessary advice; but, according to the description you give me, I am confident washing your head in cold water will cure you; I mean, having water poured on your head, and rubbed with an hand, from the crown of your head to the nape of your neck. When I lay in yr place, and on yr pillow, I assure [you], I fell into tears last night, to think that my charming little insolent might be then awake and in pain, and tooke it to be a sin to go to sleep.

For this tender passion towards you, I must be contented that your Prueship will condescend to call yourself my well-wisher. I am going abroad, and write before I go out, least accidents should happen to prevent my writing at all. If I can meet with further advice for you, I will send it in a letter to Alexander. I am, dear Prue, ever thine.

To the Same.

April 2, 1717.

Dear Prue,

I am just come from a parliamentary club; and can only say all yr family is well, especially he who is ever yrs.

To the Same.

[undated.] [1717.]

DEAR PRUE,

I am, as you observe, still in town, and have your rallying letter. The claims of the fair sex are, you say, unaccountable: 'tis well for you they are; for, I assure you, I think you both the fairest and the best of women.

I have been much at home and alone since we parted. I am come to a resolution of making my three children my partners, and will constantly lay up something out of all receipts of money for each of them, in a box bearing the name of the little one to whome it belongs. Betty grows tall, and has the best air I ever saw in any creature of her age. I am going to dine with the Speaker. Things at Court seem to be in a very uncertain way. I am, dear Prue, eternally yours.

To the Same.

April 10, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

It is now Wednesday, and, meeting with your letter, I write now, least I should not have leisure to-morrow, when our board are to meet very early. Now, as to your letter. You say I am reported a Tory. You know I have always an unfashionable thing, called conscience, in all matters of judicature or justice. There happened, a little while ago, a petition to be brought into the House of Commons

from the Roman-catholicks, praying relief as to point of time, and the meaning of certain clauses which affected them. When there was a question just ready to be put upon this, as whether it should be rejected or not, I stood up, and said to this purpose :

" Mr. Speaker,

" I cannot but be of opinion, that to put severities upon men merely on account of religion is a most grievous and unwarrantable proceeding. But, indeed, the Roman-catholicks hold tenets which are inconsistent with the being and safety of a Protestant people ; for this reason we are justified in laying upon them the penalties which the parliament has from time to time thought fitt to inflict : but, S^r^, let us not pursue Roman-catholicks with the spirit of Roman-catholicks, but act towards them with the temper of our own religion. If we do so, we shall not expect them to do any thing in lesse time than is necessary to do it, or to conduct themselves by rules which they do not understand," &c.

When I had ventured to say this, others followed ; and there is a bill directed for the relief of the petitioners. I suppose this gave an handle to the fame of my being a Tory ; but you may, perhaps, by this time, have heard that I am turned Presbyterian ; for the same day, in a meeting of an 100 parliament men, I labour'd as much for the Protestant Dissenters.—Now for the news. Mr. Walpole, Mr. Methuen, and Mr. Pulteney, have resigned

their offices. Mr. Stanhope is to go into the Treasury. Mr. Addison and Ld Sunderland are to be Secretaryes of State. Ld Townshend is removed from Ld-Lt of Ireland; he is to be succeeded by the Duke of Bolton: and the Duke of Newcastle to be Ld-chamberlain. We have got no money. I recover very fast of my gouty lamenesse; and, now I am in a better way, I own to you I have had a sad time, scarce ever well of the gout since we parted. The children and all yr family are well. God bless you.

As soon as I have money, I will have Pall-Mall searched for a house.

To the Same.

St. James's, *April* 13, 1717.

Dear Prue,

We are here all well. They tell me I shall be something in the new changes; but what I know not, nor do I care, as it may make me with more comfort and pleasure yr most obedient ser'nt, and loving husband.

To the Same.

April 22, 1717.

My dear Prue,

I have yours, which is full of good sense, and shews in you a true greatness of mind. But at the same time that, according to your advice, I shun all

engagements which may ensnare my integrity, I am to seek all occasions of profit that are consistent with it. Little Molly, who is in the house with me, is a constant dun to get money; for it gives my imagination the severest wound when I consider that she, or any of my dear innocents, with nothing but their mere innocence to plead for them, should be exposed to that world, which would not so much as repair the losses and sufferings of their poor father, after all his zeal and supererogatory service. You say well, "it will be well for them to have it to say their father kept his integrity;" but if they say, at the same instant, he left us competent estates, it will be so far from lessening, that it will advance his character. But I shall not spend much time to convince you that it is a good thing to get money, but solemnly promise you I will no more omit any fair opportunity of doing it.

You writ to me some time ago to order you a news-paper; I have done so, and the letter from the Secretary's office also will come every post to you.

The scene of business will be very warm at the next session; but my lesson is so short (that of following my conscience), that I shall go through the storm without losing a wink of sleep. I have told you, in a former letter, that ever since you went I have been almost as great a cripple as your dear mother was; and indeed I recover mighty slowly. I take your advice of temperance, and am, with my whole heart, yours for ever.

Mr. Gillmore's affair is quite finished with great successe, insomuch that Sir Isaac Newton is desirous the machine may stand at his house, and be carried from thence to the parliament. Benson, Gillmore, and I, meet to-morrow, to concert all matters relating to it, against the House of Commons meet again, which is on the 6th of May.

To the Same.

[undated.]

Dear Prue,

I have yours, with your advice against temptation, &c. All I can aver is, that I have learned a language and written a booke, to keep me out of vanities. All shall be done as fast as I can. You have here inclosed what you directed I should send for Morgan Davies.

Thus far I writ on Saturday last; but went to Mrs. Clayton's, and, with some people there, went to Court, and was detained so as not to be able to get away to dispatch my letter to you, for which I beg your pardon. If I do not do my businesse just now, I must be contented to go on in the beaten dull road, and aim no more at lively strokes.

Oh, Prue, you are very unkind in writing in so cool a strain to the warmest, tenderest heart that ever woman commanded. I am, dear Prue, yr most obedient husband, and most humble servant.

I have directed the cream of tartar to Mr. Alexander Scurlock.

To the Same.

[*May* 1, 1717.]

DEAR PRUE,

You never date your letters, which very much perplexes me. To avoid the same fault, I tell you that I have just received yours on Wednesday evening, May the 1st, and sit down to answer now I am alone and at leisure. I am heartily concerned for your eyes. I have often told you, I believe you have used enchantments to enslave me; for an expression in yours of *good Dick* has put me in so much rapture, that I could forget my present most miserable lameness, and walk down to you. I have at this time interest enough to do what you ask for Sandy; but I do not ask Mr. Secretary Addison any thing. Gillmore dined with me to-day, when Benson was expected, but did not come, to our great uneasiness; for we were to have taken measures to bring the matter into parliament, and concerted everything else relating to the machine, which is a most prodigious work.

My Lord Cadogan, who is now in the first degree of favour, sat with me here the other night above an hour. I should, by his great frankness and generosity of mind, be rightly recommended and represented, but my decrepid condition spoils all. The money is not yet come to hand, which makes me very uneasy, and out of patience. I think the affair which Sandy asks for, is to be surveyor of glasse windows for Carmarthen, and an adjacent

county. I had not interest in the Treasury till this new commission was constituted, but think there is not one in it that would not be ready to do me a little favour. My dear little, peevish, beautifull, wife governess, God blesse you.

I do not write news to you, because I have ordered the letter from the Secretary's office to be sent to you instantly.

Thursday, Three in the Afternoon, May 2, 1717.

I had a very painfull night last night, but, after a little chocolate an hour or two ago, and a chicken for dinner, am much more at ease. Yr servant.

To the Same.

[undated.]

DEAR PRUE,

I am under much mortification from not having a letter from you yesterday ; but will hope that the distance from the post, now you are at Blengorse, is the occasion.

I love you with the most ardent affection, and very often run over little heats that have sometimes happened between us with tears in my eyes. I think no man living has so good, so discreet a woman to his wife as myself ; and I thank you for the perseverance in urging me incessantly to have done with the herd of indigent unthankful people, who have made me neglect those who should have been my care from the first principle of charity.

I have been very importunate for justice to the endeavours I have used to serve the publick; and hope I shall very soon have such reparation as will give me agreeable things to say to you at our meeting, which God grant to you and yr most obsequious husband.

To the Same.

May 9, 1717.

Dear Prue,

I have intelligence from Carmarthen that you are well at Blengorse. Upon serious reflection, your not giving me one line yrself is such a slight notice of me, that indeed I will not write to you hereafter but in answer to your own hand. If Sandy tells me you are well; I will repartee, that I am well, to him, without further pains-taking. I was forced to lye last night at a lodging next door to Mr. Wilks, in Covent-garden, because our vault was yesterday cleaning.

The children and all your family are well. Yours ever.

To the Same.

May 11, 1717.

Dear Prue,

I have a letter from Blengorse of the 6th, from Mr. Sandy. You might yrself have made use of the same conveyance. I cannot, nor will I, bear such apparent neglect of me; and, therefore, if you do not write yourself, except you are not well, I will not write to you any more, than by telling your secretary, I am well, &c. Yours.

To the Same.

May 22, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

Your son is now with me very merry in rags, which condition I am going to better, for he shall have new things immediately. He is extremely pretty, and has his face sweeten'd with something of the Venus his mother, which is no small delight to the Vulcan who begot him. Ever yours.

To the Same.

[undated.]

DEAR PRUE,

If you knew how glad I am to see a long letter from you, I dare say, as fantastically shy as you are of doing any thing that should make your husband think you love him, you would oftener afford me that pleasure. When Jonathan answers my letters, I shall know what to do ; but, if I thought quite so ill of him as the rest of his relations do, I should wholly decline the thought of serving him. I never had any thought of making an expence at Carmarthen but on a fairer prospect than I ever yet saw.

I have had abundance of reflection since we parted ; and, in the future part of my life, you'le find me a very reserved man, and clear of all hangers-on. I find by all the care and industry which a man uses for others, if they are beholden to your pockett, they are only ashamed they were obliged to you, and leave your interest. I shall, therefore, hereafter

make my expence upon my own way of living, and my own houshold and little family. Though my wife gives herself whimsical airs of saying, if she is unworthy, yet the children—I say, tho' you talk of the children, if I will not mind you ; I tell you they are dear to me more that they are yours than that they are mine. For which I know no reason, but that I am, in spite of yr Ladyship's coynesses and particularities, utterly yours.

To the Same.

May 30, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I have yours, wherein you railly about Venus and Vulcan. I do not doubt but I shall see you as fine a lady as ever you were ; I am sure I shall think you so : but complacency, and a little regard to a poor decrepid creature, ungratefully and barbarously used, I should think, you owe me as a whigg, if not as a wife. This day there comes on in the House of Commons a debate, whether the Earl of Oxford should be tryed, and when. I am going thither out of curiosity. I am, dear Prue, ever yours.

To the Same.

June 15, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I am heartily glad my letter, which you received on Whitsuntide, was so agreeable to you. It is indeed in our power to make each other as happy as mortalls are capable of being. I have, in pursuance

of the resolution I told you of, parted with my new man, and have now only Willmot. If you think Sam would recover here, it is well to send him ; but I cannot tell when I can leave the town, because the tryall of my Lord Oxford will prolong the session : the managers for that purpose were named yesterday. I have been a little intemperate, and discomposed with it ; but I will be very sober for the future especially for the sake of the most amiable and most deserving woman, who has made me her happy slave and obedient husband.

To the Same.

June 20, 1717.

Dear Prue,

I have yours of the 14th, and am infinitely obliged to you for the length of it. I do not know another whome I could commend for that circumstance ; but where we intirely love, the continuance of any thing they do to please us is a pleasure. As for your relations ; once for all, pray take it for granted, that my regard and conduct towards all and singular of them shall be as you direct.

I hope, by the grace of God, to continue what you wish me, every way, an honest man. My wife and my children are the objects that have wholly taken up my heart ; and as I am not invited or encouraged in any thing which regards the publick, I am easy under that neglect, or envy of my past actions, and chearfully contract that diffusive spirit within the interests of my own family. You are the head of

us ; and I stoop to a female reign, as being naturally made the slave of beauty. But, to prepare for our manner of living when we are again together, give me leave to say, while I am here at leisure, and come to lye at Chelsea, what I think may contribute to our better way of living. I very much approve Mrs. Evans and her husband ; and, if you would take my advice, I would have them have a being in our house, and Mrs. Clark the care and inspection of the nursery. I would have you intirely at leisure, to pass your time with me in diversions, in books, in entertainments, and no manner of businesse intrude upon us but at stated times. For, though you are made to be the delight of my eyes, and food of all my senses and faculties, yet a turn of care and housewifery, and I know not what prepossession against conversation-pleasures, robbs me of the witty and the handsome woman to a degree not to be expressed. I will work my brains and fingers to procure us plenty of all things, and demand nothing of you but to take delight in agreeable dresses, chearful discourses, and gay sights, attended by me. This may be done by putting the kitchen and the nursery in the hands I propose ; and I shall have nothing to do but to passe as much time at home as I possibly can, in the best company in the world. We cannot tell here what to think of the tryall of my Lord Oxford ; if the ministry are in earnest in that, and I should see it will be extended to a length of time, I will leave them to themselves, and wait upon you. Miss Moll grows a mighty

beauty, and she shall be very prettily dressed, as likewise shall Betty and Eugene; and, if I throw away a little money on adorning my brats, I hope you will forgive me: they are, I thank God, all very well; and the charming form of their mother has tempered the likeness they bear to their rough sire, who is, with the greatest fondness, yr most obliged, and most obedient husband.

To the Same.

June 21, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I have yours of the 17th, and am beholden to you that you will be persuaded to dresse when I am with you. As for my share about the brats, Gillmore's affair goes on so happily, that I am in no manner of doubt but I shall be able to do amply for them. I like your expression about immortality, and know our happinesse in next life will depend very much upon our behaviour to each other in this. We may promote or interrupt each other on the way thither by our conduct; and, as I do not now doubt your part to me, so I hope you will not mine to you. As for my vivacityes, they are changed into chearful endeavours for the good of my family. I never can, I own at the same time, be what they call thoroughly frugall; but my expence shall be at home, in a plentifull supply of all things for you and the bratts, with regard to pleasures as well as necessaries. Mr. Hoadly, the Bishop of Bangor, has, in the Sermon for which he

is so ill-treated, done like an Apostle, and asserted the true dominion established by our Blessed Saviour. I am, dear Prue, yr most affectionate, obliged, obedient husband.

To the Same.

CHELSEA, *June* 24, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I received a letter from you without date. Your first article is about Sam, for whom you have the enclosed advice. There was no danger of my being a manager against Ld Oxford without I had sought it, which I was far from doing; so far from that, that I had not the curiosity to be there to-day, which was the first day of his tryall. I am at Chelsey with my books, and, by the help of God, will, for the future, avoid all odious offices, except where the safety of my country is immediately concerned. I wish the behaviour of selfish and unskilfull [people] may not put us into the danger which we escaped only by the intervention of Providence. I have been at Chelsey ever since Saturday, and have enjoyed great satisfaction in my solitude. Betty and Molly were with me here yesternight, that is, on Sunday evening; they were very good company, and I treated them with strawberries and cream, and, according to my fond way, eat more than both of them. I do not design to be at the House of Commons during the tryall, but passe my time, while it lasts, in what will, I hope

bring a large sum of money in the winter. I am glad your opinion falls in with mine, as to parting with Dymock, &c. I am, dear Prue, ever yours.

To the Same.

[*July* 2, 1717.]

DEAR PRUE,

Yours of the 25th of last month is inquisitive whether the affair of Gillmore passes the House this present session of parliament. We have examined into the necessary method for such an invention. We must, in the first place, have a patent under the Great Seal for fourteen years, which is a thing cannot be denyed. When we have this, we are to set forth to the parliament, by petition, that we have such a patent, and hope we shall appear to merit a longer term than the Crown is able to give us, and ask of the legislative power to add to the fourteen years twenty-one more ; so that, in the whole, the profits in the invention will be in our familyes thirty-five years. We are going to take the patent immediately, which secures us at first, and shall bring our petition for the longer time next session. Benson is at *all the charge*, that is, the main expence ; but you need not doubt but I shall, one way or other, be out an hundred pounds before it is perfected. All this while you are to know, that we are to have our charges placed in common when the thing comes to bear. It is demonstration that here is a very considerable estate ; but I am come to that, that be it never so certain, I shall not act upon it in

my expences till I am actually in possession of the growing profits. Excellent reformation! You shall be obeyed about Mrs. Clark, and Mrs. Keck, and every thing else in my power. The children are the most amiable things in the world, and I will keep them very gay and prettily dressed, for I grow a dull family creature. All my public-spirit and gallantry is turned into the care of a wayward beauty called a wife, and a parcel of brats called children. Last night my Lord of Oxford was acquitted by the Lords without coming to a tryall. The Commons exhibited articles of impeachment against him: when they came to the place of tryall, the Lords insisted that the articles of treason should be first tryed; the Commons insisted on their own method, and would not come to the Hall on those terms, upon which the Lords acquitted their peer. But the Commons immediately went into a debate to bring in a bill to punish him another way; which debate is adjourned till to-morrow morning, and it is possible my Lord Oxford's triumph may be but short. Yrs ever.

To the Same.

July 11, 1717.

TEN THOUSAND TIMES MY DEAR,
DEAR, PRETTY PRUE,

I have been in very, very great pain for having omitted writing last post. You know the unhappy gayety of my temper when I have got in; and

indeed I went into company without having writ before I left my house in the morning, which I will not do any more. It is impossible to guess at all the views of courtiours; but, however, I am of opinion the Earle of Oxford is not in so triumphant a way as his friends imagine. He is to be prosecuted by way of bill, or act of parliament, next session, in order to punish him according as he shall appear to deserve; and, in the mean time, to be excepted out of the act of grace which comes out next week.

Please to take the advice you give me on this subject, and keep your conversation out of the dispute. Your letter has extremely pleased me with the gayety of it; and, you may depend upon it, my ambition is now only turned towards keeping that up in you, and giving you reasons for it in all things about you. Two people who are intirely linked together in interest, in humour, and affection, may make this being very agreeable; the main thing is, to preserve always a disposition to please and be pleased. Now as to yr last, when you think fitt, to looke at you, to hear you, to touch you, gives delight in a greater degree than any other creature can bestow; and indeed it is not virtue, but good-sense and wise choice, to be constant to you. You did well not to dwell upon one circumstance, in your letter; for, when I am in good health, as I thank God I am at this present writing, it awakes wishes too warmly to be well born when you are at so great a distance. I do not see any

mention of yr man Sam; I hope the Doctor's prescription has been usefull to him.

Think, dream, and wish for nothing but me, who make you a return in the same affection to you for ever. Yr most obsequious obedient husband.

Pray date yr letters.

To the Same.

July 26, 1717.

Dear Prue,

I have your kind letter, which expresses your fears that I do not take care of myself as to catching cold, and the like. I am carefull enough when I am awake; but in the night the cloaths are kicked on the floor, and I am exposed to the damp till the coolnesse awakes me. This I feel at present in my arms and leggs, but will be carefully tucked up hereafter. I wait with impatience for the receipt of money out of the Treasury, to make further payments. I believe, when I have it, I shall wholly turn off my coach-horses; for, since I am at my study whole days together, it is, I think, a senseless thing for me to pay as if I was gadding all that while, and showing myself to the world. I have sent your inclosed to Mrs. Keck. She came into the dining-roome to me when I sent away last letter, and we had some tea; and, instead of such chat as should naturally arise between a great gallant and a fine lady, she tooke upon her to tell me, that I did spend my money upon my children, but that they ought to be better accommodated as to their dress, and

the like. She is, indeed, a very good Prue ; and, tho I divert myself with her gravity and admonition, I have a sincere respect for her. I was last night so much enamoured with an author I was reading, and some thoughts which I put together on that occasion, that I was up till morning, which makes me a little restive to-day. Your daughter Moll has stole away my very heart : but doubt not but her brother and sister will recover their share when we are all together, except their mother robbs them all of him who is, dear Prue, entirely yours.

To the Same.

July 29, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

Yours of the 25th is before me. I am always glad when you write a great deal ; but do not hurt your eyes to scribble longer than is easy to you. Your kind expression is the most welcome and pleasing thing which could possibly arrive at me. Mr. Glanvill of the Treasury asked me the other day, how my wonderful girle did ? There is, it seems, a lady of his acquaintance who visits Betty at school, and cryes her up for a greater wit than her father—that is not much—but than her mother either. I am every day walking about the offices to get our salaryes paid, that I might go into the country, and particularly the Bath, whence you shall direct me further, that is, command my motions. But, if I find my limbs easy to me, I believe I shall vigorously

pursue my journey to the dearest of women to the most affectionate of men.

Poor, dear, angry, pleased, pretty, witty, silly every thing, Prue, yrs ever.

To the Same.

[*July* 31, 1717.]

My Dear Wife,

Yours [of the] 27th came to hand. I am very far from being insincere in my resolves about parting with insignificant people. I am ready to burst with indignation against my own folly, and melt with gratitude for yr goodness in bearing so long as you have. I am in purgatory till it is otherwise, and am really in danger of falling into the contrary extream of being too near and reserved. God almighty grant that we may meet together in such dispositions as to enjoy with our little ones the only true pleasures of religion and virtue. Yrs ever.

To the Same.

Aug. 9, 1717.

My dear Wife,

Yours of the 4th is full of that natural terrour you have upon you by the apprehensions of thunder. There is no talking away such fears. I earnestly recommend you to the protection of God under that and all other amazement and failing of spirit. I take all the measures I am able to be a comfort to you, as you are a very great one to me ; for I indeed, from reason and reflection, as well as tendernesse

and passion, take you for the best of women. How happy shall we be, when we are out of debt, to have nothing to do but to please and exhilarate each other, and educate our children in the love of that God who made us their parents! The poor little things seem (as far as my partiality will let me judge) to have very good endowments. I hope we shall live to see these talents improved.

We have not had any thunder at all in these parts. God preserve you to your family, and, dear Moll, yr most affectionate husband, and most obedient ser'nt.

To the Same.

Aug. 17, 1717.

Dear Prue,

I am in the utmost concern to find you so very uneasy as you are in the countrey. I am confident, if you had such a fellow as Dymock, whome you might command, it would be better with you, and you might be mistresse of your estate as absolutely as you are of, dear Prue, yr most obsequious husband and ser'nt.

To the Same.

[*Aug.* 1717.]

Dear Prue,

I have yours of the 19th. I have done about the mention of Dymock, and believe you are in the right. The other circumstance to be considered in yr letter is about removing. You say I did not tell

you I had resolved it when you left the town. I did not myself know it then ; but yr instructions to me were, Pall-mall, St. James's-street, Gerard street, or a place near a church : which last you will have. I am confident dayly intelligence of what passes at the playhouse will be some hundreds in my way ; and money is the main thing : get I always could, but now I will get it and keep it. Yr affair is to make and keep yrself chearful ; you shall have nothing to do but to enjoy, it shall be my part to labour and gett.

I have had much struggle by reason of ill-payments, and unreasonable, hasty, severe people ; among the rest, that hagg Lady Vandeput. I have paid her to the end of last quarter, and have given her warning, and can remove any time between this and quarter-day without paying more than this quarter.

I shall on Michaelmas-day have 593 l. due to me. If I can find means to have that advanced, I will pay off the coach-horses quite, and have no charge of equipage of any kind till we are together again in London.

How can you let yr spirit sink so as to mind what people say whom you do not esteem ? Be yrself, and reserve your best self for, dear Prue, yours ever.

I go to-morrow to Tunbridge, with Dr. Garth, to visit Lady Marlborough and the Duke ; so perhaps you may not have a letter by Tuesday's post, for I fear I shall not return till Wednesday.

To the Same.

[*Aug.* 1717.]

DEAR PRUE,

I returned last night from Tunbridge, whither my last told you I was going on Sunday morning, to be back on Wednesday night, which I did accordingly, and found yours of the 22nd, and that of 24th. Yours, 22d, speaks again of Dymock. I give that matter up, and believe you in the right. Yours, 24th, concerning Mrs. Philips; I lament the poor ladie's fate, and share in the uneasiness the reflection upon it gives you. Pray do not give way to fancys about your health, but bear up and expect good days, negligent of this world as to its duration, carefull as to its uncertainty. The enclosed letter I send you, to show you a present difficultie I labour under; and shall be determined by you.

When the commissioners parted, they resolved to meet at Edinburgh on the 10th of the next month. But that I am not able to do, for many reasons. The gentleman who writes the enclosed, Sir Harry Houghton, will be ready to relieve me in the middle of No^{br}, provided I hasten thither now; if not, I must stay till the latter end of January. The staying in Scotland till then would breake all my measures. If I followed my own inclinations, I should go to Wales tho I stayed but two days, and crosse the countrey into the Lancashire road. I got on horseback at Tunbridge, and am confident I can ride thirty miles a day with ease; however, I design to take the method you propose of a chaise.

I

Suppose I should bring Madam Clark down with me, only to attend yr journey; it would, I think, be right. Yr opinion of these great points, next post, will be very welcome. Yr daughter Betty, who is here two or three days for the holydays of Bartholomew-tide, desires to know whether I am writing to you or not; if I am, she desires her duty. Molly cannot endure any kindnesse I shew this visitant, and I am not a little delighted to see a young lady jealous of my favour. If you and I were together, and all our children with us, I should never be a leisure moment out of my own house.

I am resolved, God willing, to have it so; and, for the future, even travel with my whole family. I will get the better of you in this matter; and you must submit to have me fond of you and yours at what place, and in what way, I think fitt. This is the harshest piece of arbitrary power I will be ever guilty of. Yours ever.

To the Same.

[*undated.*]

DEAR PRUE,

The last I received from you, which was last night, had no date. It is indeed, as you observe, a strange kind of life we lead, and the separation is painfull to me for one reason more than it is to you.

If you think fit to go to the Bath, I cannot imagine but a woman of your estate will find friends enough, to raise as much money as will carry you thither.

I alter the manner of taking my journey every time I think of it. My present disposition is, to borrow what they call a post-chaise of the Duke of Roxborough. It is drawn by one horse, runs on two wheels, and is led by a servant riding by. This rider and leader is to be Mr. Willmot, formerly a carryer, who answers for managing on a road to perfection, by keeping tracks, and the like. I think also at present to be off of my new house, and let things be as they are till we meet, when you shall chuse for yourself an house ; *which I will like because you like it.*

As to your desire of contriving plenty of money, I have made a bargain with our paymaster for so much, whether it is come out of the Treasury, to pay always within ten days after quarter-day from X next ; so that we will not want any more. I shall contrive also to have a quarter beforehand, and never let family tick more for victualls, cloaths, or rent. I know this [is] better talk to you, than if it were a paper of Wit, written by your beloved Cowley. But all shall, God willing, be punctually performed by, dear Prue, yr most obsequious husband, and most humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

Saturday, Aug. 31, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

A man of quality, going to town, waits to take this with him, so that I cannot say more till Tuesday. Yours ever.

To the Same.

HAMPTON-COURT, *Aug.* 31, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I wish you would once say, you would like a thing, because I like it. I know not whether what I have taken is to be called in a court. It is a fore door, at which a coach can set down at the very threshold, in Hart-strèet, Covent-garden; and behind it a little court, in which there is but one house, into King's-street, Covent-garden. I have taken no lease, and can part with it when I please to Mr. Wilks, who designs to buy it of the landlord. As to all other matters, I am contriving for the best. You talk of the cheapest way, &c. to get to town. I beg of you to be easy in such points; you shall have everything your heart can wish, in the reach of a moderate fortune. Pray be contented with laying up all your estate, which I will enable you to do; for you shall be at no manner of charge in any thing in nature for yrself, children, or servants, and they shall be better provided for than any other family in England; for I shall turn my expence and delight all that way. Therefore, in the name of God, have done with talk of money, and don't let me lose the right I have in a woman of wit and beauty, by eternally herself turning into a dun: Forgive the expression. When my heart is fixed to think of you as the object of love, esteem, and friendship, and all that is soft; it is in a moment turn'd into sorrow and anxiety, to find ways to make you contented

about trash and dirt. Pray let it be otherwise: till you do, a thousand good qualities in you are (like a miser's wealth) mine without enjoyment. Yr son grows a lusty boy, and is yr servant, as is his father most heartily.

I writ to you a note to-day before, by one going to town; and write again, having occasion to send Willmot on other businesse.

To the Same.

HAMPTON-COURT, *Sept.* 14, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

You hear from me so often from this place, that I fear you think I am become, what you mortally hate, a Courtier. But, being obliged to defer my journey for some days, I have taken it in my head to spend that little wit and humour, which they say I have, rather in the company of the greatest persons in the world (who, if they do me no other good, are cheaper conversation), than with such from whome I can neither reap experience or any other valuable thing, and by whome I dayly impoverish myself. Madam Vandeput has thoroughly nettled me; but, as she is of the fair sex, I shall not make answer to her usage in word or deed, but go to town on Monday, and move from her house that week, and towards Scotland the weeke after, so as to be at Edinburgh the beginning of Oct^br. Sir Harry Houghton has again writ me word he will relieve me when I let him know my business requires my return to London. Yrs ever.

To the Same.

Sept. 18, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

Yours of the 13th of Sep^br^ tells me you have got the amusement of the gout. We must, in all cases, look upon every thing in the most hopefull light, and not put the worst upon accidents. If women are instigated with desire so much as men, when they are gouty, we shall have odd time of it, and you will, in your heart, at least be tractable to me. We shall be rich, and we must take the distemper peculiar to that circumstance in good part. You see I obey your orders, and don't write peevishly, tho I cannot but be out of humour at losing so delicious a morsell as yr Ladyship by frequent incapacities, as you will be in if this disease should frequently visit you. Gillmore's project is certain to succeed, and I bear the present, from the prospect of the future, with an equal mind. I am, Madam, yr Ladyship's most oblig'd husband, and most obedient, humble servant.

To the Same.

Sept. 20, 1717.

MY DEAR PRUE,

I have yours of the 16th, and am heartily troubled that we share in a new calamity, to wit, having the same distemper. Pray take care of yourself, and you will find that we shall be in great plenty before

another year turns round. My dear Wife, preserve yourself for him that sincerely loves you, and to be an example to your little ones of religion and virtue. If it pleases God to blesse us together with life and health, we will live a life of piety and chearful virtue. Your daughter Besse gives her duty to you, and says she will be your comfort, but she is very sorry you are afflicted with the gout. The brats, my girls, stand on each side the table; and Molly says, that what I am writing now is about her new coat. Besse is with me till she has new cloaths. Miss Moll has taken upon her to hold the sand-box, and is so impertinent in her office, that I cannot write more. But you are to take this letter as from your three best friends,

BESSE, MOLL, and THEIR FATHER.

Eugene was very well this morning.

Moll bids me let you know that she fell down just now, and did not hurt herself.

Betty and Moll give their service to Sam and Myrtle.

To the Same.

Sept. 24, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I am still in the house at St. James's-street, but shall leave it on Thursday, if I can dispatch [the] businesse I expect to do to-morrow. I do hereby promise you never, directly or indirectly, to have

any thing to do with the Court ; for I am convinced there is nothing to be done with those poor creatures called great men, but by an idolatry towards them, which it is below the spirit of an honest, free, or religious man, to pay.

This, I hope, you will take for good news, for it brings my thoughts and cares into a narrower compasse, and is what you have ever been persuading me to. My own duties at the theatre, Gillmore, &c. will amply do any thing I can form to myself, without stooping to servilities. I have some reason to expect that the Royall Family itself would be glad to favour me, but there are many obstacles between poor me and them.

Now, if I have health, which, by the blessing of God, encreases to a comfortable degree, this resolution of throwing away all pretensions from the Court may, perhaps, fortify me to be the more usefull to my King and Country in Parliament, and every where else. The children, God be thanked, are all well. Now let me answer to what you say, that I have not expressed any thing about a desire of our meeting again. There is nothing upon earth I wish so much, provided always that you will be what you ought to be to me, and not let me burn for what ought to be free to me, and that you will have the children in the house with us ; for I am come to take great delight in them. When I return from Scotland, we will never part more. I am, with the sincerest affection, yr obsequious husband, and obedient servant.

To the Same.

[*Sept.* 28, 1717.]

DEAR PRUE,

I have your agreeable letter of the 23rd instant; the first time you ever so much as alluded to any thing that way. My dear Wife, let us strive to improve and recommend our persons to each other. As for the 100 l. a quarter, I have secured it, during this commission, from Xmas next; for I have agreed with a paymaster to let me have my salary ten days after the quarter shall become due; and have provided that this will be having a quarter beforehand, for I shall be supported in Scotland by what is already due, and not what is growing due. When we once come to endeavour mutually to please each other, we shall succeed, and be always in good-humour. The brats are all well, and I am ever truly thine.

To the Same.

Sept. 30, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I am sorry you have spent your time so as that you are at a losse for credit enough to bring you from a place you dislike. I have told you that I cannot pay a quarter beforehand till Xmas; but, from that instant, I think we shall be in as much plenty as any family in England. Gillmore is an inestimable jewel; he is now with his family at Nettleton, within eight miles of Bath, but has this post sent

me a letter, in which I find certain proof of the most usefull work in the world.

The Commission in Scotland stands still for want of me at Edinburgh. It is necessary there should be four there, and there are now but two; three others halt on the road, and will not go forward till I have passed by York.

I have, therefore, taken places in the York coach for Monday next. I shall, I hope, be able to send you word, the post before I leave the town, that all things are left in a comfortable way. I am, dear Prue, yr most obsequious husband, and most humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

St. James's-street, *Oct.* 3, 1717.

Dear Prue,

I have yours. As to the incivilities and the like, I wish I had known they were to so great a degree sooner, I would have come and persuaded you to remove where you might have been mistress: and it is a jest for one, who has of their own, to be uneasy for want of changing place.

I fear I shall be detained here a day or two longer than I intended, for want of money; but, in all things, I will go as near as I can to yr demands. I shall not have 100 l. to lay down till Xmas. Yrs.

To the Same.

[*Oct.* 5, 1717.]

DEAR PRUE,

Yours of the 30th of September now lies before me. I have already told you, that I cannot pay down 100 l. beforehand, for your house and the like, till the 25th of December; from after which day I have agreed to be paid punctually my salary as soon as due, that is, within ten days after it is due. I take you at yr word, to pocket none of it, but let it go to family uses; but you shall, if you please, leave the house-rent out of it, for I will spend on my children more than what is barely necessary. You are a coquet in the expression of "setting aside the agreeableness of my person"—you well know no woman has a better. I wish you would resolve to keep a discreet, orderly woman, to take care of yr children; and why may not Mrs. Evans do for yr businesse of providing the table and the like?

I will not go in the chaise; but will, according to your Ladyship's advice, go in the stage-coach. I observe that you are pleased that I do not remove till you come to town: I am very glad it is agreeable to you. I am very much troubled at yr postscript; but what has a woman of yr spirit and fortune to do but to live in a house or lodgings where she is mistresse? But I cannot, at this distance, understand your reasons; when we meet, I hope these kind of ails will be at an end for ever.

As to money, I have at this hour eight hundred and forty-three pounds due to me, and find a very hard matter at any rate to supply myself with cash to leave the town, paying the coach, the house bills, new cloathing the children, and the like. It is known by those to whome I apply that I want it, and I shall pay enough for it. But nothing is dearer than asking a courtiour any thing. There is no doubt of Gillmore's affair being a considerable fortune, and the theatre seems to be in a very prosperous way. I am, dear Prue, ever yrs.

To the Same.

Oct. 8, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I have been bustling about the town all day, and am come home when the post bell rings.

Despise those who use you ill, and value those who love you; and you will make happy yrself, and most humble servant, yr fond husband.

To the Same.

Oct. 20, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

After many resolutions and irresolutions concerning my way of going, I go, God willing, tomorrow morning, by the Wakefield coach, on my way to York and Edinburgh. God of his infinite mercy preserve you, and grant us an happy meeting!

I am in too great an hurry, for I go on a sudden ; but the next stage shall bring you a long letter from yr most affectionate husband, and most faithfull humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

STAMFORD, *Oct.* 23, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

I am got thus far ; and my journey, I think, does me as much good for the gout, as rocking the same way did you for the spleen.

I have ever proposed to myself to move in as usefull a sphere to mankind as I was able, and have this journey taken with me Monsieur Majon, a French minister (whome you have seen) in order to speake French readily at my return ; for I find one cannot understand what passes without that language. He lyes in the same room with me on the road ; and the loquacity which is usuall at his age, and inseparable from his nation, at once contributes to my purpose, and makes him very agreeable. It is my businesse, while I am absent from you, to fill my leisure hours with as much innocent amusement as I can. The children are almost always in my head at the same time with yourself ; and I hope we shall, when God blesses us in a meeting, contrive to make them a pleasure as a care. I take very great care of myself in hopes of that happy hour, and am, yr most affectionate, obsequious husband.

To the Same.

EDINBURGH, *Nov.* 5, 1717.

DEAR PRUE,

Five letters from you followed me to this place, which I received all at once this day. One of the 21st approves my letter to Mr. John Thomas, and desires you may do what you shall think fit by fine, by way of reserving a respect from yr children, and doing what you think fitt with your estate in favour of such of yr children as shall please you most. This is what I have often advised you to do, and shall never gainsay.

Another letter is without date, and has in it an enclosed note from your cousin Alexander. What is required there shall come to you by the post of Thursday next from this place. A third scrip, without date, says, my "letters are short, and so shall yours," and concludes. Your fourth is a very pleasant humour, which you say you can support, provided you do not want money, and you have bespoke gossips for yr next child, &c. This is as it should be: keep up this spirit, and live and reign; you shall want nothing on my part towards it.

That which I think must have been the last you writ is of the 28th, and speaks of an assurance or obligation that concerns my aunt Scurlock. The post here comes in and out the same day; and I have many other letters to write, so must take till Thursday also for that. I am, dear Prue, ever yours.

I shall return to London the beginning of next week, and I know the Parliament will separate for some days after they meet, which time I would take to come with a coach and six horses for you, accompanied by Mrs. Pugh. If you like this, I think it would close yr negotiations with a good air, and drown all impertinencies about us.

To the Same.

Friday, Nov. 15, 1717.
PEARCE BRIDGE, IN THE COUNTY OF DURHAM.

DEAR PRUE,

I am now at my inn in perfect good health, with my limbs much better than usuall, after seven days journey from Edinburgh towards London. You cannot imagine the civilities and honours I had done me there, and never lay better, ate or drank better, or conversed with men of better sense than there. I grow very fond of waiting upon you, and bringing you from Wales, when the House is adjourned for a few days ; and, since you hear travelling agrees with me, I hope to receive your permission to attend you. It will be a ridiculous thing for me to go down thither without you, and, when you are there, never come near the place ; and I am firmly resolved to see your territories the first leisure days from Parliament. Therefore you must consider whether you will let me bring you, or come alone, and go backward and forward with me again this winter : for, as for seasons and bad roads, I despise

those considerations when I have a view for the good of my family or country. Yours ever.

We shall, God willing, be at York on Friday, and London the Saturday following.

To the Same.

[*undated.*]

Dear Wife,

You cannot imagine the rage yours put me into. How can you believe I can bear the treatment you tell me you receive, as being affronted and called fool to your face, by rude blockheads? I could not outlive such an injury done you, were I present at it: nor know I how to suffer it as it is, with all the excuses which I make to keep myself in countenance from their stupidity and brutality. If I had patience, I should debate with you on this subject, and ask, how it is possible a woman of your sense could possibly fall into a dispute with such ideots and savages? But my heart is too much raised to chastise them, to enter into such cool expostulations with you.

Take it for granted, it is impossible to be easy but with mere correspondents and hir'd servants. You never will be with relations, who are often apt to think your being in the world an injury. For the remainder of our days, let us have an entire confidence in each other, with a mutuall complacency and desire to please each other; and I

shall be a protection to you, and you a comfort to me against all that can happen from without.

Mrs. Evans is not to be expected down; and when I proposed to Mrs. Clark what you bid me, she did not receive it as she ought, I thought; but made scruples, and seemed to be forming a merit in case she should comply, which shewed she would have had shynesses and airs that would have made you constantly uneasy. Pluck up a resolute calme spirit, and do not doubt but there are people enough to be had fitt for yr purpose, without courting any of yr present acquaintance. I will consult Mrs. Keck on this subject of a maid fitt for you, and proper to go down to you, of which you shall have an account next post. You bid me take care of my health; pray do you preserve yourself to yr little ones, who are perfectly well, and yr husband, who cannot be well except you are so.

I love you with all my soul, poor dear Prue, and am for ever yours.

TO ELIZABETH STEELE.

[undated.]

My dear Child, Miss Betty,

One matter of moment or other has detained me all this day; nor can I see you to-night. I thank you for your purse; and, if you and I live till this day twelvemonth, you are to ask me for it again full of gold. God bless you. Remember me to Molly. Be observant of the good guardian God has rais'd for you.

To the Same.

May 21, 1719.

DEAR CHILD,

I have your pretty letter, and have sent to know whether I can have any tickets or not, or whether there will be room; but have not yet an answer. Be gratefull, obedient, and respectfull to Mrs. Keck; and you will oblige yr most affectionate father.

Service to Molly.

To the Same.

EDINBURGH, *Sept.* 17, 1720.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I keep your letters safely tyed together, in order to observe your improvement, which I take notice of with great pleasure. Mrs. Marye's mark is no less a satisfaction to me, because it denotes that she is well, and shows her endeavour to converse with me. But I hope you will now begin to make her sign the first letters of her name. Be pleased to write every other letter in English. To make this easy, I will be contented that what is written in your mother tongue one post, may be in French the next.

Be very dutiful and obedient to Mrs. Keck, and believe me to be the most affectionate of fathers.

Remember me to Molly.

To the Same.

EDINBURGH, *Oct.* 7, 1720.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have yours of the 30th of the last month ; and, from your diligence and improvement, conceive hopes of your being as excellent a person as your mother : you have great opportunityes of becoming such a one, by observing the maxims and sentiments of her bosome friend, Mrs. Keck, who has condescended to take upon her the care of you and your sister, for which you are always to pay her the same respect as if she were your mother.

I have observed that your sister has, for the first time, written the *initiall* or first letters of her name. Tell her I am highly delighted to see her subscription in such fair letters, and how many fine things those two letters stand for when she writes them. *M. S.* is *milk* and *sugar*, *mirth* and *safety*, *musick* and *songs*, *meat* and *sauce*, as well as *Molly* and *Spot*, and *Mary* and *Steele*.

You see I take pleasure in conversing with you, by prattling any thing to divert you. I hope we shall next month have an happy meeting, when I will entertain you with something that may be as good for the father as the children, and consequently please us. I am, Madam, yr affectionate father, and most humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

March 29, 1721.

DEAR CHILD,

I have received yours, and beg your pardon that I did not, as I designed, visit you with your brother; but he was so dirty that I was ashamed to bring him to your school. I beseech you to continue in the good and diligent way you are in, and you will be an unspeakable delight and satisfaction to, Madam, yr most affectionate father, and most obedient, humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

April 5, 1721.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have received your letter by the penny-post, and read it with great pleasure and comfort, tho I was then a little discomposed.

I have to-day had a tooth drawn, and am disorder'd also with a cold; but, as soon as I go out, I will not fail to visit Mrs. Keck, and my dear little ones.

Service to *Misse* Molly; but tell her I am sorry she has forgot the charms I find in *M. S.* Your affectionate father.

To the Same.

April 5, 1721.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER,

I thank you for your kindness, which makes you attempt to draw your father's picture; but I hope,

and am confident, you are still better employed in imitating the life of your excellent mother. Her friend is the best example and help you can have in pursuing that amiable and worthy pattern. I am this morning much better, and purpose, God willing, to go and bring home your brother; but I shall not adventure to introduce him to such fine ladyes as his sisters are till he has gott his new cloaths. I am, dear child, most affectionately yours.

My thanks and service to *M. S.*

To the Same.

April 12, 1721.

My dear Betty,

Write this carefully over again with the amendment of a large letter beginning every line, as likewise the stops as pointed to you; and send both this, and what you write again, to, Madam, yr most affectionate father, and most humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

April 14, 1721.

My dear Child,

I have received yours of this day, with the corrected copy, in which there are still some faults, and which I will shew you when I see you. In the mean time, as I take pleasure in instructing you from the diligence I see in you, I remark to you,

that you are apt to add flourishes to your writing. To this you must by no means accustome yourself; but remember that plainness and simplicity are the chief beauties in all works and performances whatsoever. Be pleased to forbear adding at the end of a verse a line as thus ——. You have done so to every line of this last copy. In the main, you have done it very well, and to the satisfaction of, Madam, yr most affectionate father, and most humble servant.

To the Same.

July 15, 1723.

My dear Child,

I have received a letter from you, but without a date; which, my dear, was a great omission. I ought not to find faults in so kind and so affectionate an epistle; but exactnesse is an excellent quality, which every one may be mistresse of, and therefore I would not have you want it. I am much better than I was, and attribute my recovery to the prayers of my dear children. I have taken a great deal of pains to serve the world, and hope God will allow me some time to serve my own family. My good girl, employ yourself always in some good work, that you may be as good a woman as your mother. Pray remember me to dear little Molly; and know me for, Madam, yr affectionate father, and humble servant.

To the Same.

Oct. 1, 1723.

My dear Child,

This confesses to my dear children, that I came to this place three weeks ago with a very heavy heart; but I hope I am now better, and desire Betty to write to me, and let me know what she hears from Mrs. Bullock, and the like accounts, for my soul is wrapped up in your welfare; and I am, dear children, yr most affectionate father, and most humble ser'nt.

Direct To Sir Richard Steele, Member of Parliament, at Bath.

To the Same.

Nov. 22, 1723.

My dear Child,

I have your letter with the news of Eugene's death, and yr reflections thereupon. Do you and your sister stay at home, and do not go to the funerall. Lord grant me patience! Pray write to me constantly. Yr affectionate father, and obedient servant.

Why do not you mention Molly? Is she dead too?

To the Same.

Bath, *Dec.* 14, 1723.

My dr Child,

You must pardon me that I write by a servant's hand, because I have a great deal of

business to do to night, and therefore cannot, under my present infirmity, do it in my own hand. I know nothing of the gentlewoman with whom you are left, but depend very much upon Mrs. Bullock's conduct and judgement. You say the gentlewoman who is yr governess is a very well-bred woman. If she proves so to me, I shall honour her as my sister, for the justice and kindness she shows to you. Pray show her this letter, and tell her so. You say she never was abroad in any dependent way before. Pray desire her to write to me, to let me know what terms she is upon, that I may proceed accordingly for her service. I am, my dear child, most tenderly affected with the kind and prudent expressions in yr letter; but cannot speak my mind to you till I see you, w^{ch}, I hope, will be about the time the Parliament meets. I am, dear Betty, yr most affectionate father, and most humble ser'nt.

Give my love to your sister Molly, and service to Mr. Snow and Mrs. Snow.

To the Same.

April 5, 1724.

My dear little Girle,

Pray send me word when Mrs. Evans and you begin your journey, and let her know she shall be well received here by all us country people. God send us an happy meeting! Dear child, yr affectionate father, and humble servant.

Give my service to the good old man, and to his son, and his sons, and his cousin Betty.

To the Same.

April 8, 1724.

DEAR BETTY,

I desire you to be carefully dress'd to-day in yr black, in order to receive a visitant in honour of yr brother: let your sister be in her white; and be both as cheerfully suited as you can be. I shall call upon you soon after dinner, and am yr friend upon all occasions. Dear Betty, yr obedient, faithfull father.

TO MOLLY STEELE.

Feb. 6, 1724–25.

DEAREST MOLLY,

My cousin Scurlock sends me word, you are mighty uneasy for coming hither. My dear child, you stayed at yr own request, and I am heartily glad that you think of coming to me, where you shall enjoy all the happinesse that you can. I am glad also to hear my Cousin thinks of coming with you when the coach comes to Hereford in better time. She shall have all the welcome this place will afford her, which you may tell her from yr affectionate father.

To the Same.

July 22, 1728.

MY DEAR, DEAR MOLLY,

I write to you because Mr. Duke is going to Bristol. I desire you'de give my service to

Dr. Lane; and remember, dear Molly, yr ever loving and affectionate father.

We are here in great joy because my mare has brought a fole [foal], a male one, after 11 months time.

TO MRS. SCURLOCK, SENR.

LORD SUNDERLAND'S OFFICE, WHITEHALL,
Sept. 20, 1707.

MADAM,

By Tuesday's post I tooke the liberty to write to you on the most important occasion, and have been in ten thousand anxieties ever since that time, for the reception which that letter is to find. The circumstance is so tender, and my happinesse hangs so much upon it, that I could not forbear seconding my first address to you with a second, tho, I protest to you, I sett pen to paper with as much diffidence as if I had the same passion for yourself as for yr daughter. I do not entertain you with an account of my fortune, and those particulars which will naturally be enquired into by a parent, because I doubt not but you have so good an opinion of Mrs. Scurlock's prudence, that you do not believe she would throw herself away. As to your favour to my pretensions, I hope it upon no other foundation, than making it appear to you that, as to your own part in the affair, there is not that man breathing that could come into your alliance, who should, in all the offices of life, and peculiar esteem for yrself, exceed the gratitude of, Madam, your most obedient, most humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

Nov. 13, 1707.

HONOURED MADAM,

I am very glad to hear, by uncle Scurlock's last letters, that you have taken in your horses in order to your journey. Since my last to you, I have had an affliction which was perfectly new to me; a fitt of the gout. I am a little awkward at my crutches, and have been not so patient as longer experience of this sort of evill usually makes us. Our new house will be ready for our goods next week; and, as soon as it is so, we will remove to it. I am out of pain, though I cannot stirr; in the mean while your daughter is dancing at the other end of the roome. She gives her duty to you. I am extremely oblig'd to my uncle Scurlock for his kind present, which will be in town to-morrow night. I am, Madam, yr most obedient son, and most humble ser'nt.

To the Same.

LORD SUNDERLAND'S OFFICE, *Nov.* 20, 1707.

HONOURED MADAM,

My wife show'd me a letter of the 15th from Mrs. Pugh, wherein there are the generall complaints under which every body at present is fighting, whose concerns are wholly in land. Chearful and ingenuous tempers may agree so well, and concert their affairs in such a manner, as to make all things

easy. I extremely long to see you ; and hope to be on my legs to receive you, when I first do myself the honour of kneeling to you, and telling how much I am, Madam, yr most obedient son, and most humble ser'nt.

My absolute governesse gives her duty to you.

TO MR. MORGAN.

Dec. 7, 1724.

Sir,

I had the other day the honour of a message from you by Mr. Prichard, with an account that you had the greatest respect and love for my daughter, and a request of my permission to make your address to her. I told Mr. Prichard, that he who was to have her, (must win her and wear her) ; that she was a girl of good sence, and I shou'd take that with her in whomsoever pretended to her ; but, upon speaking of the same subject that evening, and mentioning your civility for her, to her, she told me with a great deal of calmness and ease, that she was very young, and very well contented to wait her time and choice under my care ; and begged of me to let you know, that nothing could do her a greater offence than such an application. I told Mr. Prichard this the same evening ; but I cannot forbid it with more earnestness than I do now, and desire you would give my service to yr father, to whom I am, as well as to you, Sir, yr most obedient, humble servt.

To the Same.

Dec. 20, 1724.

Sir,

I have the favour of yours of the 19th instant, about the same matter to which I thought I had fully answered before. Speaking of back-friends is unnecessary, for indeed nobody can have any power with me but what should be necessary for affairs of that kind conserning which I am taulking; therefore nobody could possibly lay any exceptions conserning you, or your family. But there was no dispute raised about that matter in the least; the young woman did not enter into any inquiry concerning your circumstances, neither does she yet. Therefore I earnestly desire you will lay aside all thoughts of this kind; for the child is young and discreet, and utterly declares against admiting your courtship, which I desire you would please to forbear, and you'le very much oblige, Sir, yr most obedient, humble servant.

Miscellaneous

To Jonathan Swift.

Lord Sunderland's Office, *Oct.* 8, 1709.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Secretary Addison went this morning out of town, and left behind him an agreeable command for me, *viz.* to forward the inclosed, which Lord Halifax sent him for you. I assure you, no man could say more in praise of another than he did in your behalf at that noble Lord's table on Wednesday last. I doubt not but you will find by the inclosed the effect it had upon him. No opportunity is omitted among powerful men, to upbraid them for your stay in Ireland. The company that day at dinner were Lord Edward Russel, Lord Essex, Mr. Maynwaring, Mr. Addison, and myself. I have heard such things said of that same Bishop of Clogher, with you, that I have often said he must be entered *ad eundem* in our House of Lords. Mr. Philips dined with me yesterday; he is still a shepherd, and walks very lonely through this unthinking crowd in London. I wonder you do not write sometimes to me.

The town is in great expectation from Bickerstaff; what passed at the election for his first table being to be published this day sevennight. I have not seen Ben Tooke a great while, but long to usher you and yours into the world. Not that there can be any thing added by me to your fame, but to walk

bare-headed before you. I am, Sir, your most obedient, and most humble servant.

To the Same.

May 19, 1713.

SIR,

Mr. Addison shewed me your letter, wherein you mention me. They laugh at you, if they make you believe your interposition has kept me thus long in my office. If you have spoken in my behalf at any time, I am glad I have always treated you with respect; though I believe you an accomplice of the *Examiner*. In the letter you are angry at, you see I have no reason for being so merciful to him, but out of regard to the imputation you lie under. You do not in direct terms say you are not concerned with him: but make it an argument of your innocence, that the *Examiner* has declared you have nothing to do with him. I believe I could prevail upon the *Guardian* to say there was a mistake in putting my name in his paper; but the English would laugh at us, should we argue in so Irish a manner. I am heartily glad of your being made Dean of St. Patrick's. I am, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant.

To the Same.

BLOOMSBURY, *May* 26, 1713.

SIR,

I have received yours, and find it is impossible for a man to judge in his own case. For an allusion

to you, as one under the imputation of helping the *Examiner*, and owning I was restrained out of respect to you, you tell Addison, under your hand, "you think me the vilest of mankind," and bid him tell me so. I am obliged to you for any kind things said in my behalf to the Treasurer; and assure you, when you were in Ireland, you were the constant subject of my talk to men in power at that time. As to the vilest of mankind, it would be a glorious world if I were: for I would not conceal my thoughts in favour of an injured man, though all the powers on earth gainsaid it, to be made the first man in the nation. This position, I know, will ever obstruct my way in the world; and I have conquered my desires accordingly. I have resolved to content myself with what I can get by my own industry, and the improvement of a small estate, without being anxious whether I am ever in a Court again or not. I do assure you, I do not speak this calmly, after the ill usage in your letter to Addison, out of terror of your wit, or my Lord Treasurer's power; but pure kindness to the agreeable qualities I once so passionately delighted in, in you. You know, I know nobody, but one that talked after you, could tell "Addison had bridled me in point of party." This was ill hinted, both with relation to him, and, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant.

I know no party; but the truth of the question is what I will support as well as I can, when any man I honour is attacked.

To The Duke of Marlborough.

Jan. 1, 1711–12.

My Lord,

It was with the utmost consternation I, this day, heard your Grace had received a dismission from all your employments : and lest you should, out of the softness which is inseparable from natures truly heroic, believe this a diminution of your glory, I take the liberty to express to you, as well as I can, the sense which mankind has of your merit.

That great genius with which God has endowed you, was raised by Him, to give the first notion, that the enemy was to be conquered : till you were placed at the head of armies, the Confederates seemed contented to shew France that she could not overcome Europe ; but it entered not into the heart of man, that the rest of Europe could conquer France. When I have said this, my Lord, there arise in my soul so many instances of your having been the ministering angel in the cause of Liberty, that my heart flags, as if it expected the lash of Slavery, when the sword is taken out of his hand who defended me and all men from it. Believe me, Immortal Sir, you have a slighter loss in this change of your condition than any other man in England. Your actions have exalted you to be the chief of your species ; and a continued chain of successes, resulting from wise counsels, have denominated you the first of mankind in the age which was blessed with your birth. Enjoy what it

is not in the power of fate itself to take from you, the memory of your past actions. Past actions make up present glory. It is in the power of mortals to be thankless to you for doing them ; but it is not in their power to take from you that you have done them. It is in the power of man to make your services ineffectual in consequences to your country ; but it is not in their power to make them inglorious to yourself. . Be not therefore you concerned ; but let us lament, who may suffer by your removal. Your glory is augmented by comparison of your merit to the reward it meets with : but the honour of your country—

It is as impossible to do you dishonour, as to recall yesterday ; your character is indelible in the book of fame : and though, after a few turbulent years, it will be said of us, the rest of mankind, " they were ; " it will be to the end of time said, " Marlborough is." My Lord, you are possessed of all the English glory of the whole age in which you live ; and all who shall be transmitted to posterity, must pass down only memorable, as they have exerted themselves in concert with you, or against you, with endless honour as your friends, infamy as your enemies. The brightest circumstance that can be related of the Queen herself will be, it was she for whom Marlborough conquered. Since it is thus, my Lord, if even the glorious edifice which your country decreed should be erected to perpetuate your memory, stand unfinished, let it stand so a monument of the instability of human

affairs. Your glory is not changed because the rest of mankind are changeable. It is not your fault that other generals have received a greater reward for escaping your valour, than you have for making them fly before it.

Had it pleased God that we had lost you by your mortality, the greatest man next to you would have had the mitigation of his inferior desert, that the same age could not produce such another: but how will he do to avert the eyes of all mankind, upon all exigencies, from looking towards you yet living?

My noble Lord, be convinced that you cannot be disgraced; that your stand in human life is immutable; that your glory is as impassive as the fame of him who died a thousand years ago. Whence is it that we thus love you, that we thus honour you? It is from the very qualities which lay you open to the assaults of your enemies. That sweet complacency, that admirable spirit, which is so tempered for the arts of common life, makes us lose our wonder in love. Is that amiable man, with the easy gesture, that gentle, beseeching mien, the man terrible in battle, the scourge of tyrants? My Lord Marlborough, do not think there are not men who can see your several accomplishments, your excellencies, that expose you to the possibility of being ill-treated. We understand you too well not to see, and to thank you, that you come home, as if you had never heard the acclamations of the universe; that your modesty and resignation have made

your transcendent, your heroic, your god-like virtue, capable of being blended in society with other men. And, my Lord, do you think we can let that virtue be dangerous to you, which only makes your other qualities not dangerous to us? Accept, O familiar, O amiable, O glorious man, the thanks of every generous, every honest man, in Great-Britain. Go on in your easy mien of life, be contented we see you, we admire you, we love you the more. While you are, what you cannot cease to be, that mild virtue is your armour; the shameless ruffian that should attempt to sully it, would find his force against it as detestable as the strength of a ravisher in the violation of chastity, the testimonies of a perjured man confronting truth, or clamour drowning the voice of innocence. I am, my Lord, your grateful fellow-subject, and faithful friend.

To Alexander Pope.

Jan. 20, 1711–12.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your very kind letter. That part of it which is grounded upon your belief that I have much affection and friendship for you, I receive with great pleasure. That which acknowledges the honour done to your "Essay" I have no pretence to; it was written by one whom I will make you acquainted with, which is the best return I can make to you for your favour to, Sir, your most obliged humble servant.

To the Same.

June 1, 1712.

Sir,

I am at a solitude, an house between Hampstead and London, wherein Sir Charles Sedley died. This circumstance set me a thinking and ruminating upon the employments in which men of wit exercise themselves. It was said of Sir Charles, who breathed his last in this room,

" Sedley has that prevailing gentle art,
Which can with a resistless charm impart
The loosest wishes to the chastest heart ;
Raise such a conflict, kindle such a fire
Between declining virtue and desire,
Till the poor vanquish'd maid dissolves away,
In dreams all night, in sighs and tears all day."

This was an happy talent to a man of the town ; but, I dare say, without presuming to make uncharitable conjectures on the author's present condition, he would rather have had it said of him that he prayed,

" Oh thou my voice inspire,
" Who touch'd Isaiah's hallow'd lips with fire ! "

I have turned to every verse and chapter, and think you have preferred the sublime heavenly spirit throughout the whole, especially at—" Hark a glad voice "—and—" The lamb with wolves shall graze."—There is but one line which I think below the original :

" He wipes the tears for ever from our eyes."

You have expressed it with a good and pious, but not so exalted and poetical a spirit as the prophet, "The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." If you agree with me in this, alter it by way of paraphrase or otherwise, that, when it comes into a volume, it may be amended. Your poem is already better than the Pollio. I am your, &c.

To the Same.

Nov. 12, 1712.

I have read over your "Temple of Fame" twice, and cannot find any thing amiss, of weight enough to call a fault, but see in it a thousand thousand beauties. Mr. Addison shall see it to-morrow: after his perusal of it, I will let you know his thoughts. I desire you would let me know whether you are at leisure or not? I have a design, which I shall open a month or two hence, with the assistance of the few like yourself. If your thoughts are unengaged, I shall explain myself further. I am your, &c.

To the Right Honourable the [*Earl of Oxford*], *Lord High Treasurer of Great-Britain.*

Bloomsbury-square, *June* 4, 1713.

My Lord,

I presume to give your Lordship this trouble to acquaint you, that having an ambition to serve in the ensuing parliament, I humbly desire your Lordship will please to accept of my resignation of my office as Commissioner of the Stamp Revenue.

I should have done this sooner, but that I heard the commission was passing without my name in it, and I would not be guilty of the arrogance of resigning what I could not hold. But having heard this since contradicted, I am obliged to give it up, as with great humility I do by this present writing. Give me leave on this occasion to say something as to my late conduct, with relation to the late men in power, and to assure you whatever I have done, said, or written, has proceeded from no other motive, but the love of what I think truth. For merely as to my own affairs, I could not wish any man in the administration rather than yourself, who favour those that become your dependants with a greater liberality of heart than any man I have ever before observed. When I had the honour of a short conversation with you, you were pleased not only to signify to me, that I should remain in this office, but to add, that if I would name to you one of more value, which would be more commodious to me, you would favour me in it. I am going out of any particular dependance on your Lordship ; and will tell you with the freedom of an indifferent man, that it is impossible for any man who thinks, and has any public spirit, not to tremble at seeing his country, in its present circumstances, in the hands of so daring a genius as yours. If incidents should arise, that should place your own safety, and what ambitious men call greatness, in a balance against the general good, our all depends upon your choice under such a temptation. You have my hearty

and fervent prayers to Heaven, to avert all such dangers from you. I thank your Lordship for the regard and distinction which you have at sundry times shewed me; and wish you, with your country's safety, all happiness and prosperity. Share, my Lord, your good fortune with whom you will; while it lasts, you will want no friends; but if any adverse day happens to you, and I live to see it, you will find I think myself obliged to be your friend and advocate. This is talking in a strange dialect from a private man to the first of a nation; but to desire only a little, exalts a man's condition to a level with those who want a great deal. But I beg your Lordship's pardon; and am, with great respect, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient, and most humble servant.

To the Same.

[1719.]

My Lord,

I am very glad of the occasion wherein I have the good fortune to think the same way with your Lordship, because I have very long suffered a great deal of pain in reflecting upon a certain virulence with which my zeal has heretofore transported me to treat your Lordship's person and character. I do protest to you, excepting in the first smart of my disgrace and expulsion out of the House of Commons, I never writ any thing that ought to displease you but with a reluctant heart, and in opposition to much good-will and esteem for your many great

and uncommon talents. And I take the liberty to say thus publicly to yourself what I have often said to others on the subject of my behaviour to you; I never had any other reason to lessen my Lord of Oxford than that which Brutus had to stab Cæsar —the love of my country. Your Lordship will, I hope, believe, there cannot be a more voluntary, unrestrained reparation made to a man than that I make to you, in begging your pardon thus publicly for every thing I have spoken or written to your disadvantage, foreign to the argument and cause which I was then labouring to support. You will please to believe, that I could not be so insensible as not to be touched with the generosity of part of your conduct towards me, or have omitted to acknowledge it accordingly, if I had not thought that your very virtue was dangerous, and that it was (as the world then stood) absolutely necessary to depreciate so adventurous a genius, surrounded with so much power as your Lordship then had. I transgressed, my Lord, against you, when you could make twelve peers in a day; I ask your pardon, when you are a private nobleman; and, as I told you when I resigned the Stamp-office, I wished you all prosperity consistent with the public good, so now I congratulate you upon the pleasure you must needs have in looking back upon the true fortitude with which you have passed through the dangers arising from the rage of the people, and the envy of the rest of the world. If to have rightly judged of men's passions and prejudices, vices and virtues,

interests and inclinations, and to have waited with skill and courage for proper seasons and incidents to make use of them for a man's safety and honour, can administer pleasure to a man of sense and spirit, your Lordship has abundant cause of satisfaction. In confidence that you will accept of my sorrow and repentance for the unprovoked liberties I have taken in my former writings, I make you my patron in this present discourse on the greatest occasion that has perhaps ever happened in England. Your Lordship will see I write in haste ; and the necessity of pressing forward to be time enough to be of any use, will excuse the failures in style and expression. I shall therefore immediately fall into the matter of the bill, which, I fear, may change this free state into the worst of all tyrannies, that of an aristocracy. I shall support my reasons for that terror by running through the several parts of it, and making it appear, that this is more likely than any other consequence that can be supposed will attend such a law as this would be. The whole tenor of it is very unfortunately put together, if any thing but an additional power to the Peers is intended by it.

To Mr. Meredith.

St. James's-street, *Oct.* 26, 1714.

Sir,

I have a second letter from you. The style of the first was very harsh to one whom you are not at all acquainted with ; but there were suggestions in it which might give excuse for being out of

humour at one whom you might perhaps think was the occasion of damage to you. You mentioned also an orphan, which word was a defence against any warm reply; but, since you are pleased to go on in an intemperate way of talk, I shall give myself no more trouble to enquire about what you complain, but rest satisfied in doing all the good offices I can to the Reverend Author's Grandchild, now in town. Thus, leaving you to contend about your title to his writings, and wishing you success, if you have justice on your side, I beg you will give me no more ill language, and you will oblige, Sir, your humble servant.

To Bishop Hoadly

[1718.]

My Lord,

I hope I shall be able to wait upon you at the place you command me at three of the clock on Monday next. There is no great danger of your assuming more power than is welcome: you never exert so much as is voluntarily given you. Coming home the other night, after your great condescension in liking such pleasures as I entertained your Lordship with, I made the distich, which you will find if you turn over the leaf:

Virtue with so much ease on Bangor fits,
All faults he pardons, though he none commits.

I am, my Lord, your most obliged, most obedient, humble servant.

To William Congreve.

[Occasioned by Mr. Tickell's Preface to the Four Volumes of Mr. Addison's Works.]

[1722.]

SIR,

This is the second time that I have, without your leave, taken the liberty to make a public address to you. However uneasy you may be *for your own sake* in receiving compliments of this nature, I depend upon your known humanity for pardon, when I acknowledge, that you have this present trouble for *mine*. When I take myself to be ill treated with regard to my behaviour to the merit of other men, my conduct towards you is an argument of my candour that way, as well as that your name and authority will be my protection in it. You will give me leave, therefore, in a matter that concerns us in the poetical world, to make you my judge, whether I am not injured in the highest manner; for, with men of your taste and delicacy, it is a high crime and misdemeanor to be guilty of any thing that is disingenuous: but I will go into the matter.

Upon my return out of Scotland, I visited Mr. Tonfon's shop, and thanked him for his care in sending to my house the volumes of my dear and honoured friend Mr. Addison, which are at last published by his secretary Mr. Tickell; but took occasion to observe, "that I had not seen the work before it came out;" which he did not think fit to excuse any otherwise than by a recrimination,

" that I had put into his hands at an high price, a comedy called ' The Drummer ; ' which, by my zeal for it, he took to be written by Mr. Addison, of which, after his death, he said, I directly acknowledged he was the author." To urge this hardship still more home, he produced a receipt under my hand, in these words :

" *March* 12, 1715.

" Received then the sum of fifty guineas, for the copy of the Comedy called ' The Drummer, or The Haunted House : ' I say, received by order of the Author of the said Comedy.

" RICHARD STEELE."

And added, at the same time, that since Mr. Tickell had not thought fit to make that play a part of Mr. Addison's Works, he would sell the copy to any bookseller that would give most for it.

This is represented thus circumstantially to shew how incumbent it is upon me, as well in justice to the bookseller, as for many other considerations, to produce this Comedy a second time, and take this occasion to vindicate myself against certain insinuations thrown out by the publisher of Mr. Addison's writings concerning my behaviour in the nicest circumstance, that of doing justice to the merit of my friend.

I shall take the liberty, before I have ended this letter, to say why I believe " The Drummer " a performance of Mr. Addison ; and, after declaring this, any surviving writer may be at ease, if there be any one who has hitherto been vain enough to

hope, or silly enough to fear, it may be given to himself. . . .

I am sure you have read my quotations with indignation against the little zeal which prompted the Editor, who, by the way, has in himself done nothing in applause of the works which he prefaces, to the mean endeavours of adding to Mr. Addison, by disparaging a man who had, for the greatest part of his life, been his known bosom friend, and shielded him from all the resentments which many of his own works would have brought upon him at the time in which they were written. It is really a good office to society, to expose the indiscretion of intermeddlers in the friendship and correspondence of men, whose sentiments, passions, and resentments, are too great for their proportion of soul. Could the Editor's indiscretion provoke me even so far as within the rules of strictest honour I could go, and I were not restrained by supererogatory affection to dear Mr. Addison, I would ask this unskilful creature what he means, when he speaks in the air of a reproach, that " The Tatler " was laid down as it was taken up, without his participation ; let him speak out and say, why " without his knowledge " would not serve his purpose as well. If, as he says, he restrains himself to Mr. Addison's character as a writer, while he attempts to lessen me, he exalts me : for he has declared to all the world what I never have so explicitly done, that I am, to all intents and purposes, the author of " The Tatler." He very justly says,

the occasional assistance Mr. Addison gave me in the course of that Paper " did not a little contribute to advance its reputation, especially when, upon the change of the ministry, he found leisure to engage more constantly in it." It was advanced indeed ; for it was raised to a greater thing than I intended it : for the elegance, purity, and correctness, which appeared in his writings, were not so much my purpose, as in any intelligible manner as I could to rail [at] all those singularities of human life, through the different professions and characters in it, which obstruct any thing that was truly good and great. After this acknowledgment you will see, that is, such a man as you will see, that I rejoiced in being excelled, and made those little talents, whatever they are which I have, give way, and be subservient to the superior qualities of a friend whom I loved, and whose modesty would never have admitted them to come into daylight but under such a shelter. So that all which the Editor has said, either out of design or incapacity, Mr. Congreve must determine to end in this, that Steele has been so candid and upright, that he owes nothing to Mr. Addison as a writer ; but whether he does or does not, whatever Steele owes to Mr. Addison, the publick owes Addison to Steele. But the Editor has such a fantastical and ignorant zeal for his patron, that he will not allow his correspondents to conceal any thing of his, though in obedience to his commands. What I never did declare was Mr. Addison's, I had his direct

injunctions to hide, against the natural warmth and passion of my own temper towards my friends. Many of the writings now published as his, I have been very patiently traduced and calumniated for, as they were pleasantries and oblique strokes upon certain the wittiest men of the age, who will now restore me to their good-will, in proportion to the abatement of wit which they thought I employed against them. But I was saying, that the Editor will not allow us to obey his patron's commands in any thing which he thinks would redound to his credit if discovered. And because I would shew a little wit in my anger, I shall have the discretion to shew you, that he has been guilty in this particular towards a much greater man than your humble servant, and one whom you are much more obliged to vindicate. Mr. Dryden, in his Virgil, after having acknowledged, that " a certain excellent young man " had shewed him many faults in the translation of Virgil, which he had endeavoured to correct, goes on to say, " two other worthy friends of mine, who desire to have their names concealed, seeing me straightened in my time, took pity on me, and gave me the Life of Virgil, the two Prefaces to the Pastorals and the Georgics, and all the Arguments in prose to the whole translation." If Mr. Addison is one of the two friends, and the Preface to the Georgics be what the Editor calls the Essay upon the Georgics, as one may adventure to say they are, from their being word for word the same, he has cast an inhuman reflection upon

Mr. Dryden, who, though tied down not to name Mr. Addison, pointed at him, so as all mankind conversant in these matters knew him, with an elogium equal to the highest merit, considering who it was that bestowed it. I could not avoid remarking upon this circumstance, out of justice to Mr. Dryden, but confess, at the same time, I took a great pleasure in doing it, because I knew, in exposing this outrage, I made my court to Mr. Congreve.

I have observed, that the Editor will not let me nor any one else obey Mr. Addison's commands in hiding any thing he desires should be concealed. I cannot but take further notice, that the circumstance of marking his Spectators, which I did not know till I had done with the work, I made my own act; because I thought it too great a sensibility in my friend, and thought it, since it was done, better to be supposed marked by me than the author himself; the real state of which this zealot rashly and injudiciously exposes. I ask the reader, Whether any thing but an earnestness to disparage me could provoke the Editor, in behalf of Mr. Addison, to say that he marked it out of caution against me when I had taken upon me to say it was I that did it out of tenderness to him?

As the imputation of any the least attempt of arrogating to myself, or detracting from Mr. Addison, is without any colour of truth; you will give me leave to go on in the same ardour towards him, and resent the cold, unaffectionate, dry, and

barren manner in which this gentleman gives an account of as great a benefactor as any one learned man ever had of another. Would any man, who had been produced from a college life, and pushed into one of the most considerable employments of the kingdom, as to its weight and trust, and greatly lucrative with respect to a fellowship, and who had been daily and hourly with one of the greatest men of the age, be satisfied with himself in saying nothing of such a person, besides what all the world knew, except a particularity, and that to his disadvantage, which I, his friend from a boy, don't know to be true, to wit, " that he never had a regular pulse " ? As for the facts and considerable periods of his life, he either knew nothing of them, or injudiciously places them in a worse light than that in which they really stood. When he speaks of Mr. Addison's declining to go into orders, his way of doing it is, to lament that his seriousness and modesty, which might have recommended him, " proved the chief obstacles to it. It seems, those qualities by which the priesthood is so much adorned represented the duties of it as too weighty for him, and rendered him still more worthy of that honour which they made him decline." These, you know very well, were not the reasons which made Mr. Addison turn his thoughts to the civil world ; and, as you were the instrument of his becoming acquainted with my Lord Halifax, I doubt not but you remember the warm instances that noble Lord made to the head of the college not to insist upon Mr. Addison's

going into orders; his arguments were founded upon the general depravity and corruption of men of business, who wanted liberal education. And I remember, as if I had read the letter yesterday, that my Lord ended with a compliment, "that, however he might be represented as no friend to the Church, he never would do it any other injury than keeping Mr. Addison out of it."—The contention for this man, in his early youth, among the people of greatest power, Mr. Secretary Tickell, the executor for his fame, is pleased to ascribe to a serious visage and modesty of behaviour. When a writer is grossly and essentially faulty, it were a jest to take notice of a false expression, or a phrase; otherwise Priesthood, in that place, might be observed upon as a term not used by the real well-wishers to Clergymen, except when they would express some solemn act, and not when that order is spoken of as a profession among gentlemen. I will not therefore busy myself about "the unconcerning parts of knowledge, but be contented, like a reader of plain sense without politeness;" and, since Mr. Secretary will give us no account of this gentleman, "I admit the Alps and Apennines, instead of his Editor, to be commentators of his works, which," as the Editor says, "have raised a demand for correctness." This demand, by the way, ought to be more strong upon those who were most about him, and had the greatest advantage of "his example." But our Editor says, "that those who come the nearest to exactness are but too often fond

of unnatural beauties, and aim at something better than perfection." Believe me, Sir, Mr. Addison's example will carry no man further than that height for which Nature capacitated him; and the affectation of following great men in works above the genius of their imitators will never rise further than the production of uncommon and unsuitable ornaments in a barren discourse, like flowers upon an heath, such as the author's phrase of "something better than perfection." But indeed his preface, if ever any thing was, is that "something better," for it is so extraordinary that we cannot say it is too long or too short, or deny but that it is both. I think I abstract myself from all manner of prejudice when I aver, that no man, though without any obligation to Mr. Addison, would have represented him in his family, and his friendships or his personal character, so disadvantageously as his secretary (in preference of whom he incurred the warmest resentments of other gentlemen) has been pleased to describe him in those particulars.

Mr. Dean Addison, father of this memorable man, left behind him four children, each of whom, for excellent talents and singular perfections, was as much above the ordinary world as their brother Joseph was above them. Were things of this nature to be exposed to public view, I could shew, under the Dean's own hand, in the warmest terms, his blessing on the friendship between his son and me; nor had he a child who did not prefer me in the first place of kindness and esteem, as their father

loved me like one of them : and I can with great pleasure say, I never omitted any opportunity of shewing that zeal for their persons and interests as became a gentleman and a friend. Were I now to indulge myself, I could talk a great deal to you, which I am sure would be entertaining ; but as I am speaking, at the same time, to all the world, I considered it would be impertinent. Let me then confine myself a while to the following play, which I at first recommended to the stage, and carried to the press. No one who reads the preface which I published with it will imagine I could be induced to say so much as I then did, had I not known the man I best loved had had a part in it, or had I believed that any other concerned had much more to do than as an *amanuensis*.

But, indeed, had I not known, at the time, of the transaction concerning the acting on the stage and sale of the copy, I should, I think, have seen Mr. Addison in every page of it ; for he was above all men in that talent we call Humour, and enjoyed it in such perfection that I have often reflected, after a night spent with him, apart from all the world, that I had had the pleasure of conversing with an intimate acquaintance of Terence and Catullus, who had all their wit and nature heightened with humour, more exquisite and delightful than any other man ever possessed.

They who shall read this play, after being let into the secret that it was written by Mr. Addison, *or under his direction*, will probably be attentive to

those excellencies which they before overlooked, and wonder they did not till now observe, that there is not an expression in the whole piece which has not in it the most nice propriety and aptitude to the character which utters it; here is that smiling mirth, that delicate satire, and genteel raillery, which appeared in Mr. Addison when he was free among intimates: I say, when he was free from *his remarkable* bashfulness, which is a cloke that hides and muffles merit; and his abilities were covered only by modesty, which doubles the beauties which are seen, and gives credit and esteem to all that are concealed.

"The Drummer" made no great figure on the stage, though exquisitely well acted; but when I observe this, I say a much harder thing of the stage than of the comedy. When I say the stage in this place, I am [to be] understood to mean in general the present taste of theatrical representation, where nothing that is not violent, and, as I may say, grossly delightful, can come on without hazard of being condemned, or slighted. It is here republished, and recommended as a closet piece, to recreate an intelligent mind in a vacant hour; for vacant the reader must be from every strong prepossession, in order to relish an entertainment (*quod nequeo monstrare et sentio tantum*) which cannot be enjoyed to the degree it deserves, but by those of the most polite taste among scholars, the best breeding among gentlemen, and the least acquainted with sensual pleasure among the ladies.

The Editor is pleased to relate concerning "Cato," that a play under that design was projected by the author very early, and wholly laid aside; in advanced years he reassumed the same design, and, many years after four acts were finished, he writ the fifth, and brought it upon the stage. All the town knows how officious I was in bringing it on; and you, that know the town, the theatre, and mankind, very well, can judge how necessary it was to take measures for making a performance of that sort, excellent as it is, run into popular applause. I promised before it was acted, and performed my duty accordingly to the author, that I would bring together so just an audience on the first days of it, it should be impossible for the vulgar to put its success or due applause to any hazard; but I do not mention this only to shew how good an aid-de-camp I was to Mr. Addison, but to shew also that the Editor does as much to cloud the merit of this work as I did to set it forth. Mr. Tickell's account of its being taken up, laid down, and at last perfected, after such long intervals and pauses, would make any one believe, who did not know Mr. Addison, that it was accomplished with the greatest pain and labour, and the issue rather of learning and industry than capacity and genius; but I do assure you, that never play, which could bring the author any reputation for wit and conduct, notwithstanding it was so long before it was finished, employed the author so little a time in writing: if I remember right, the fifth act was

written in less than a week's time; for this was particular in this writer, that when he had taken his resolution, or made his plan for what he designed to write, he would walk about the room, and dictate it into language with as much freedom and ease as any one could write it down, and attend to the coherence and grammar of what he dictated. I have been often thus employed by him, and never took it into my head, though he only spoke it, and I took all the pains of throwing it upon paper, that I ought to call myself the writer of it. I will put all my credit among men of wit for the truth of my averment, when I presume to say, that no one but Mr. Addison was in any other way the writer of "The Drummer;" at the same time I will allow, that he sent for me, which he could always do, from his natural power over me, as much as he could for any of his clerks when he was Secretary of State, and told me that a gentleman then in the room had written a play that he was sure I would like, but it was to be a secret, and he knew I would take as much pains, since he recommended it, as I would for him. I hope nobody will be wronged, or think himself aggrieved, that I give this rejected work where I do; and if a certain gentleman is injured by it, I will allow I have wronged him, upon this issue, that (if the reputed translator of the first book of Homer shall please to give us another book) there shall appear another good judge in poetry, besides Mr. Alexander Pope, who shall like it. But I detain you too long upon things that are too

personal to myself, and will defer giving the world a true notion of the character and talents of Mr. Addison, till I can speak of that amiable gentleman on an occasion void of controversy: I shall then perhaps say many things of him, which will be new even to you, with regard to him in all parts of his character: for which I was so zealous, that I could not be contented with praising and adorning him as much as lay in my power, but was ever soliciting and putting my friends upon the same office. And since the Editor has adorned his heavy discourse with prose in rhime at the end of it, upon Mr. Addison's death, give me leave to atone for this long and tedious epistle, by giving you after it, what I dare say you will esteem, an excellent poem on his marriage. I must conclude without satisfying as strong a desire as ever man had of saying something remarkably handsome to the person to whom I am writing,—for you are so good a judge, that you will find out the endeavour to be witty,—and therefore, as I have tired you and myself, I will be contented with assuring you, which I do very honestly, I had rather have you satisfied with me on this subject than any other man living.

You will please to pardon me, that I have, thus, laid this nice affair before a person who has the acknowledged superiority to all others, not only in the most excellent talents, but possessing them with an equanimity, candour, and benevolence, which render these advantages a pleasure as great to the rest of the world as they can be to the owner of

them. And since fame consists in the opinion of wise and good men, you must not blame me for taking the readiest way to baffle an attempt upon my reputation, by an address to one whom every wise and good man looks upon with the greatest affection and veneration. I am, Sir, your most obliged, most obedient, and most humble servant.

Epistles Dedicatory.

To the Right Honourable the Lord Cutts.

[From *The Christian Hero.*]

Tower Guard, *March* 23, 1701.

My Lord,

The address of the following papers is so very much due to your Lordship, that they are but a mere report of what has passed upon my guard to my commander, for they were writ upon duty, when the mind was perfectly disengaged, and at leisure, in the silent watch of the night, to run over the busy dream of the day; and the vigilance which obliges us to suppose an enemy always near us, has awakened a sense that there is a restless and subtle one which constantly attends our steps and meditates our ruin.

Thoughts of this nature a man may with freedom acknowledge to your Lordship, who have ever been so far from running into the fashionable vice of exploding religion, that your early valour first appeared against the professed enemies of Christianity; and Buda had transmitted you to late

posterity, but that you yourself have obliterated your part in that glorious scene by the fresher memory of you at Limerick and Namur.

With one honest purpose of life, and constant service of one interest and one cause, in what country have you not fought? in what field have you not bled? But I know I here offend you, nor will you allow warmth in commendation to be like a friend; but if, my Lord, to speak you generous, honest, and brave, be not friendly, I do assure you it is the only thing I will ever do in common with your enemies.

I said your enemies; but if there are any who have ignorance or malice enough to be such, their little hates must be lost in the distinction the better world allow you; and that county (whose discerning is refined by a learned and elegant university) has done you so great an honour in making you unanimously their representative in parliament, that they who would oppose your reputation, do but confess they are unacquainted with what passes in the world, and strangers to the residence of knowledge and virtue. It was there you received those rudiments of honour, which have rendered your life conspicuous enough to make you appear a worthy descendant of an ancient and distinguished family, which has served the Crown in the most eminent stations, and been equally favourites of their country; it was there you imbibed those impressions which inspire that true use of your being, which so justly divides your time between labour

and diversion, that the one does but recreate for the other, and which give a generous contempt of both when in competition with the service of that country which you love, and that God whom you worship.

Go on, my Lord, thus to contemn, and thus to enjoy life ; and, if some great English day does not call for that sacrifice which you are always ready to offer, you may in a mature age go to sleep with your ancestors, in expectation, not of an imaginary fame, but a real and sensible immortality.

As for the present I now make you, if you will accept it with your usual goodness and affection to me, I shall entertain no farther hopes ; for as your favour is my fortune, so your approbation is my fame. I am, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient, most faithful, and most humble servant.

To the Right Hon. the Countess of Albemarle.

[From *The Funeral*, a Comedy.]

[1702.]

MADAM,

Among the many novelties with which your Ladyship, a stranger in our nation, is daily entertained, you have not yet been made acquainted with the poetical English liberty, the right of dedication ; which entitles us to a privilege of celebrating whatever, for its native excellence, is the just object of praise ; and is an ancient charter, by which the Muses have always a free access to the habitation of the Graces. Hence it is that this comedy waits on your Ladyship, and presumes to welcome you

amongst us; though indeed, Madam, we are surprised to see you bring with you, what we thought was of our own growth only, an agreeable beauty; nay, we must assure you, that we cannot give up so dear an article of our glory, but assert it by our right in you: for if it is a maxim founded on the noblest human law, that of hospitality, that every soil is a brave man's country, England has a very just pretence of claiming as a native, a daughter of Mr. Scravenmore.

But your Ladyship is not only endeared to us by the great services of your father, but also by the kind offices of your husband, whose frank carriage falls in with our genius, which is free, open, and unreserved; in this the generosity of your tempers makes you both excel in so peculiar a manner, that your good actions are their own reward; nor can they be returned with ingratitude, for none can forget the benefits you confer so soon as you do yourselves.

But ye have a more indisputable title to a dramatic performance than all these advantages; for ye are yourselves, in a degenerate low age, the noblest characters which that fine passion that supports the stage has inspired; and as you have practised as generous a fidelity as the fancies of poets have ever drawn in their expecting lovers, so may you enjoy as high a prosperity as ever they have bestowed on their rewarded: this you may possess in an happy security, for your fortunes cannot move so much envy, as your persons do love. I am, Madam, your Ladyship's most devoted humble servant.

To Joseph Addison.

[From *The Tender Husband.*]

[1705.]

Sir,

You will be surprized, in the midst of a daily and familiar conversation, with an address which bears so distant an air as a public dedication: but, to put you out of the pain which I know this will give you, I assure you I do not design in it, what would be very needless, a panegyric on yourself, or, what perhaps is very necessary, a defence of the play. In the one I should discover too much the concern of an author, in the other too little the freedom of a friend.

My purpose, in this application, is only to shew the esteem I have for you, and that I look upon my intimacy with you as one of the most valuable enjoyments of my life. At the same time, I hope, I make the town no ill compliment for their kind acceptance of this Comedy, in acknowledging that it has so far raised my opinion of it, as to make me think it no improper memorial of an inviolable friendship.

I should not offer it to you as such, had I not been very careful to avoid every thing that might look ill-natured, immoral, or prejudicial to what the better part of mankind hold sacred and honourable.

Poetry, under such restraints, is an obliging service to human society; especially when it is used, like your admirable vein, to recommend more

useful qualities in yourself, or immortalize characters truly heroic in others. I am here in danger of breaking my promise to you, therefore shall take the only opportunity that can offer itself of resisting my own inclinations, by complying with yours. I am, Sir, your most faithful, humble servant.

To Lord Halifax.

[From *The Tatler*.]

April 7, 1711.

My Lord,

When I first resolved upon doing myself this honour, I could not but indulge a certain vanity in dating from this little covert, where I have frequently had the honour of your Lordship's company, and received from you very many obligations. The elegant solitude of this place, and the greatest pleasures of it, I owe to its being so near those beautiful manors wherein you sometimes reside. It is not retiring from the world, but enjoying its most valuable blessings, when a man is permitted to share in your Lordship's conversations in the country. All the bright images which the Wits of past ages have left behind them in their writings, the noble plans which the greatest Statesmen have laid down for administration of affairs, are equally the familiar objects of your knowledge. But what is peculiar to your Lordship above all the illustrious personages that have appeared in any age, is, that wit and learning have from your example fallen

into a new æra. Your patronage has produced those arts, which before shunned the commerce of the world, into the service of life; and it is to you we owe, that the man of wit has turned himself to be a man of business. The false delicacy of men of genius, and the objections which others were apt to insinuate against their abilities for entering into affairs, have equally vanished: and experience has shewn, that men of letters are not only qualified with a greater capacity, but also a greater integrity in the dispatch of business. Your own studies have been diverted from being the highest ornament, to the highest use to mankind; and the capacities which would have rendered you the greatest poet of your age, have, to the advantage of Great Britain, been employed in pursuits which have made you the most able and unbiassed patriot. A vigorous imagination, an extensive apprehension, and a ready judgement, have distinguished you in all the illustrious parts of administration, in a reign attended with such difficulties, that the same talents, without the same quickness in the possession of them, would have been incapable of conquering. The natural success of such abilities, has advanced you to a seat in that illustrious house, where you were received by a crowd of your relations. Great as you are in your honours, and personal qualities, I know you will forgive an humble neighbour the vanity of pretending to a place in your friendship, and subscribing himself, my Lord, your Lordship's most obliged, and most devoted servant.

To Lieutenant-General Cadogan.

[From *The Guardian.*]

[1713.]

SIR,

In the character of GUARDIAN, it behoves me to do honour to such as have deserved well of society, and laid out worthy and manly qualities in the service of the publick. No man has more eminently distinguished himself this way than Mr. Cadogan. With a contempt of pleasure, rest, and ease, when called to the duties of your glorious profession, you have lived in a familiarity with dangers, and, with a strict eye upon the final purpose of the attempt, have wholly disregarded what should befall yourself in the prosecution of it. Thus has life risen to you as fast as you resigned it; and every new hour, for having so frankly lent the preceding moments to the cause of justice and of liberty, has come home to you, improved with honour. This happy distinction, which is so very peculiar to you, with the addition of industry, vigilance, patience of labour, thrift and hunger, in common with the meanest soldier, has made your present fortune unenvied. For the publick always reap greater advantage from the example of successful merit, than the deserving man himself can possibly be possessed of; your country knows how eminently you excell in the several parts of military skill, whether in assigning the encampment, accommodating the troops, leading to the

charge, or pursuing the enemy; the retreat being the only part of the profession which has not fallen within the experience of those who learned their warfare under the Duke of Marlborough. But the true and honest purpose of this epistle is, to desire a place in your friendship, without pretending to add any thing to your reputation, who, by your own gallant actions, have acquired that your name through all ages shall be read with honour, where-ever mention shall be made of that illustrious Captain. I am, Sir, your most obedient, and most humble servant.

To Joseph Addison.

[From *Cato*.]

[1713.]

While you the fierce divided Britons awe,
And Cato with an equal virtue draw,
While Envy is itself in wonder lost,
And factions strive who shall applaud you most;
Forgive the fond ambition of a Friend,
Who hopes himself, not you, to recommend,
And join th' applause which all the Learn'd bestow
On one, to whom a perfect work they owe.
To my light scenes I once inscrib'd your name,
And impotently strove to borrow fame;
Soon will that die which adds thy name to mine;
Let me then live, join'd to a work of thine!

To the Worshipful Mr. John Snow, Bailiff of Stockbridge.

[From *The Importance of Dunkirk Considered.*]

[*September*, or *October*, 1713.]

Sir,

According to my promise when I took my leave of you, I send you all the pamphlets and papers which have been printed since the dissolution of the last parliament; among these you will find your humble servant no small man, but spoken of more than once in print: you will find I take up whole pages in the *Examiner*, and that there is a little pamphlet written wholly upon me, and directed to me. As you are the magistrate of the town wherein, of all places in the world, it concerns me most to appear a different man from the person whom these writers represent me, I address my vindication to you, and, at the same time, to the whole Borough.

. . . . . .

What was urged concerning Dunkirk, in the Letter to the Guardian, was apparently and professedly laid before the ministry, that they might not be unmindful of what the British nation expect from them. I say again and again, if once men are so intimidated as not to dare to offer their thoughts upon public affairs, without incurring the imputation of offending against the prerogative of their Prince; that Prince, whatever advantage his

ministers might make of his prerogative, would himself soon have no prerogative but that of being deceived. As for my part, I have that sincere and faithful duty to her Majesty, that I will never fear to attempt any thing that I am able for her service, however her favour may be intercepted from me. The Examiner accuses me of ingratitude, as being actually under salary, when I writ the letter to the Guardian; but he is mistaken in that particular, for I had resigned, not only my office in the stamp duties, but also my pension as servant to his late Royal Highness, which her Majesty hath been graciously pleased to continue to the whole family of that excellent Prince: I divested myself of all that I was so happy to enjoy by her Majesty's goodness and favour, before I would presume to write any thing, which was so apparently an advertisement to those employed in her service.

I have thrown away all expectations of preferment for the happiness of serving in parliament, and for the hopes of having a vote in the legislature in the present great crisis of affairs: as long as I enjoy this station (from which the Examiner takes the liberty to suggest I shall be expelled) I shall follow no leader or leaders, but act, that is to say, vote, according to the dictates of my conscience, in the public service. . . .

Mr. Bailiff, as there have been very unjust representations given of me in your town, as that a man of so small fortune as I am must have secret views or supports, which could move him to leave

his employments, and lose a crowd of well-wishers, to subject himself, as he must know he has, not only to the disesteem, but also the scorn and hatred of very many, who, before he intermeddled with the publick, had a partiality towards him: I answer, that I indeed have particular views; and, though I may be ridiculous for saying it, I hope I am animated in my conduct by a grace which is as little practised as understood, and that is charity. It is the happiness and comfort of all men, who have a regard to their fellow-creatures, and desire their good-will upon a proper foundation, that every thing which is truly laudable is what every man living may attain. The greatest merit is in having social virtues, such as justice and truth, exalted with benevolence to mankind. Great qualifications are not praises to the possessor but from the application of them; and all that is justly commendable among men, is to love and serve them as much as it is in your power, with a contempt of all advantages to yourself (above the conveniencies of life) but as they tend to the service of the publick. He who has warmed his heart with impressions of this kind, will find glowings of good-will, which will support him in the service of his country against all the calumny, reproach, and invective, that can be thrown upon him. He is but a poor creature who cannot bear being odious in the service of virtue. Riches and honours can administer to the heart no pleasure, like what an honest man feels when he is contending for the interests of his

country, and the civil rights of his fellow-subjects, without which the being of man grows brute, and he can never, under it, give to Heaven that worship which is called a reasonable sacrifice, nor support towards his fellow-creatures that worthy disposition, which we call disinterested friendship. The highest pleasure of the human soul consists in this charity; and there is no way of making it so diffusive, as by contending for liberty.

As to laying aside the common views by which the mistaken world are actuated, a man of liberal education can easily surmount those low considerations; and when he considers himself, from the moment he was born into this world, an immortal, though a changeable being, he will form his interests and prospects accordingly, and not make provision for eternity with perishable things. When a man has deeply planted such a sentiment as this for the rule of his conduct, the pursuits of avarice and ambition will become as contemptible as the sports of children; and there can be no honours, no riches, no pleasures laid in his way, which can possibly come in competition with the satisfaction of an enlarged and public spirit.

From this moment, therefore, I shall go on with as much vigour and chearfulness as I am able, to do all that is in my power, without the least partiality to persons or parties, to remove the prejudices which Englishman has against Englishman, and reconcile wounded brethren, so far as to behold each other's actions with an inclination to approve them.

The man who will reduce himself to this temper, will easily perceive how far his affections have been wrought upon and abused, from an opposition to particular men, to sacrifice the interests of his country itself.

The prostituted pens which are employed in a quite contrary service, will be very ready to entertain a pretender to such reformations with a recital of his own faults and infirmities; but I am very well prepared for such usage, and give up myself to all nameless authors, to be treated just as their mirth or their malice directs them.

It is the disgrace of literature, that there are such instruments; and to good government, that they are suffered: but this mischief is gone so far in our age, that the pamphleteers do not only attack those whom they believe in general disaffected to their own principles, but even such as they believe their friends, provided they do not act with as sincere a prejudice as themselves. Upon the least deviation from an implicit hatred to the opposite party, though in a case which in the nearest concern affects their country, all their good qualities are turned to ridicule; and every thing, which was before valued in them, is become contemptible. Thus in one of the papers I send you, a gentleman, who has distinguished himself by a becoming veneration, in the House of Commons, for the assembly, and has ever delivered himself with a regard to his own dignity, and that of the place he was in; is represented frivolously as a declaimer: and a noble

Lord, who is conspicuously adorned with the knowledge of letters, and is eminent for a lively sprightly eloquence, rectified by learning; is declared a companion fit only for pert novices and sophisters. And what is still more monstrous than all, a third man of quality, for the like offence, is told, in this nice age of proportioning rewards to merit and service, that he has as much as he deserves.

But it is to be hoped Englishmen will at last consider, and that the Ministry will see Dunkirk effectually demolished.

It is as frivolous as unjust, to hope to stop our mouths when we are concerned for so great a point as the business of Dunkirk, by mention of the prerogative, and urging our safety in our good and gracious Queen.

By her great example, religion, piety, and all other public and domestic virtues, are kept in countenance in a very loose and profligate age; all the hours of her precious life, which God long preserve, are divided between the exercises of devotion, and taking minutes of the sublime affairs of her government.

Besides which, her Majesty has manifested herself the most affectionate wife, the most constant friend, the most tender mother, and has filled every duty with a virtue as superior to the rest of the world as is her high condition. But I shall leave what I have to say on this topick, to the time when the consequence of it will be insignificant to me, but which, I hope, will do her honour, that is,

justice, when I am no more, and the remains of her sacred person are as common dust as mine.

But, as this bright example is in the person of a lady, it cannot be supposed that the general sense of a people, the sub-divisions of affection and interest among great men (to be learned only by conversation with them, even in their unguarded leisure), can appear to her but from the information of such as have the happiness and honour to lay them before her. Her Majesty is therefore more particularly necessitated to rely upon the intelligence of her Ministry; and, from that very reason, their fellow-subjects may be the more solicitous for what passes beyond the ordinary rules of government. Thus all which they offer for our security and implicit reliance upon what is transacted by the court of England, to wit, her Majesty's care and goodness, are arguments for exerting both our zeal and our gratitude; that at any time artful men may not take advantage of the security we have in her virtue, to indulge too much the power of any foreign Prince whatsoever, especially that of the most warlike potentate in Europe.

I cannot leave this subject without being still anxious with relation to the disrespect they accuse me of to my royal Mistress. All that can be wrested to my disadvantage is, that the Queen is concerned when any thing is to be imputed to her servants; but I deny that, and persist in it, that it is no manner of diminution of the wisdom of a Prince, that he is obliged to act by the information of others.

If I might make an abrupt digression from great things to small, I should on this occasion mention a little circumstance which happened to the late King William. He had a Frenchman who took care of the gun-dogs, whose business it was also to charge and deliver the piece to the King. This minister forgot to bring out shot into the field ; but did not think fit to let so passionate a man and eager a sportsman as the King know his offence, but gave his Majesty the gun loaded only with powder. When the King missed his aim, this impudent cur stood chattering, admiring, commending the King's skill in shooting, and, holding up his hands, " he had never seen *sa Majesté* miss before in his whole life." This circumstance was no manner of argument to those (who afterwards found out the fellow's iniquity) against the King's reputation for a quick eye, and shooting very finely. I am, with respect to the Borough and yourself, Sir, your most humble, and most obedient servant.

To the Countess of Burlington.

[From *The Ladies Library.*]

July 21, 1714.

MADAM,

I humbly desire your Ladyship would forgive the presumption I am now guilty of in presenting you with this book. I do it from the high honour and veneration I have for your great merit and

virtue. It cannot, I know, furnish your Ladyship with new reflections; and the Ladies of whom you are the happy mother have an example before them more prevalent to form them to every thing praiseworthy than any precepts they can find in the works of the best writers. But as there is much curiosity in these papers, and great strength and force in the reasonings of them; give me leave to offer this collection for the use of female life as a testimony of the respect which I, with all who are honoured with the least acquaintance with you, must pay to your Ladyship, for the eminent example you have given the world in the important characters of a wife and a mother.

To command with the mien of making a request, to oblige with the aspect of receiving favours, and to win affection without other design than making all people happy who converse with her, or depend upon her, are excellencies peculiar to my Lady Burlington. But as there is a complaisance which, like sincere friendship, speaks our good opinion in our ordinary looks and actions, more than any language can do it, I here shall go no farther than just to declare myself, with great deference, among the admirers of your great goodness and virtue; and beg of your Ladyship to forgive my saying thus much, for the forbearance of saying more, on a subject of which I am so very fond, as that of expressing myself, Madam, your Ladyship's most devoted, most obedient, and most humble servant.

To William Congreve.

[From *Poetical Miscellanies.*]

[1714.]

SIR,

My name, as publisher of the following Miscellanies, I am sensible, is but a slight recommendation of them to the publick ; but the town's opinion of them will be raised, when it sees them addressed to Mr. Congreve. If the patron is but known to have a taste for what is presented to him, it gives an hopeful idea of the work ; how much more, when he is an acknowledged master of the art he is desired to favour ? Your just success in the various parts of Poetry, will make your approbation of the following sheets a favour to many ingenious gentlemen, whose modesty wants the sanction of such an authority. Men of your talents oblige the world, when they are studious to produce in others the similitude of their excellencies. Your great discerning in distinguishing the characters of mankind, which is manifested in your Comedies, renders your good opinion a just foundation for the esteem of other men. I know, indeed, no argument against these collections, in comparison of any other Tonson has heretofore printed ; but that there are in it no verses of yours. That gentle, free, and easy faculty, which also in songs, and short poems, you possess above all others, distinguishes itself wherever it appears. I cannot but instance your inimitable " Doris," which excels, for politeness,

fine raillery, and courtly satire, any thing we can meet with in any language.

Give me leave to tell you, that when I consider your capacity this way, I cannot enough applaud the goodness of your mind, that has given so few examples of these severities, under the temptation of so great applause as the ill-natured world bestows on them, though addressed without any mixture of your delicacy.

I cannot leave my favourite "Doris" without taking notice how much that short performance discovers a true knowledge of life. "Doris" is the character of a libertine woman of condition, and the satire is worked up accordingly; for people of quality are seldom touched with any representation of their vices but in a light which makes them ridiculous.

As much as I esteem you for your excellent writings, by which you are an honour to our nation, I chuse rather, as one that has passed many happy hours with you, to celebrate that easy condescension of mind, and command of a pleasant imagination, which give you the uncommon praise of a man of wit, always to please, and never to offend. No one, after a joyful evening, can reflect upon an expression of Mr. Congreve's that dwells upon him with pain.

In a man capable of exerting himself any way, this (whatever the vain and ill-natured may think of the matter) is an excellence above the brightest sallies of imagination.

The reflection upon this most equal, amiable, and

correct behaviour, which can be observed only by your intimate acquaintance, has quite diverted me from acknowledging your several excellencies as a writer; but to dwell particularly on those subjects would have no very good effect upon the following performances of myself, and friends. Thus, I confess to you, your modesty is spared only by my vanity; and I hope you will give me leave to indulge it yet further, in telling all the world I am, with great truth, Sir, your most obedient, and most humble servant.

To Sir Samuel Garth.

[From *The Lover and Reader.*]

[1715.]

SIR,

As soon as I thought of making the LOVER a present to one of my friends, I resolved, without farther distracting my choice, to send it TO THE BEST-NATURED MAN. You are so universally known for this character, that an epistle so directed would find its way to you without your name, and I believe nobody but you yourself would deliver such a superscription to any other person.

This propensity is the nearest a kin to love; and good-nature is the worthiest affection of the mind, as love is the noblest passion of it: while the latter is wholly employed in endeavouring to make happy one single object, the other diffuses its benevolence to all the world.

As this is your natural bent, I cannot but congratulate to you the singular felicity that your profession is so agreeable to your temper. For what condition is more desirable than a constant impulse to relieve the distressed, and a capacity to administer that relief? When the sick man hangs his eye on that of his physician, how pleasing must it be to speak comfort to his anguish, to raise in him the first motions of hope, to lead him into a persuasion that he shall return to the company of his friends, the care of his family, and all the blessings of being?

The manner in which you practice this heavenly faculty of aiding human life, is according to the liberality of science, and demonstrates that your heart is more set upon doing good than growing rich.

The pitiful artifices which empiricks are guilty of to drain cash out of valetudinarians, are the abhorrence of your generous mind; and it is as common with GARTH to supply indigent patients with money for food, as to receive it from wealthy ones for physick. How much more amiable, Sir, would the generosity which is already applauded by all that know you, appear to those whose gratitude you every day refuse, if they knew that you resist their presents lest you should supply those whose wants you know, by taking from those with whose necessities you are unacquainted?

The families you frequent receive you as their friend and well-wisher, whose concern, in their behalf, is as great as that of those who are related

to them by the ties of blood and the sanctions of affinity. This tenderness interrupts the satisfactions of conversation, to which you are so happily turned; but we forgive you that our mirth is often insipid to you, while you sit absent to what passes amongst us from your care of such as languish in sickness. We are sensible their distresses, instead of being removed by company, return more strongly to your imagination by comparison of their condition to the jollities of health.

But I forget I am writing a dedication; and in an address of this kind, it is more usual to celebrate men's great talents, than those virtues to which such talents ought to be subservient; yet where the bent of a man's spirit is taken up in the application of his whole force to serve the world in his profession, it would be frivolous not to entertain him rather with thanks for what he is, than applauses for what he is capable of being. Besides, Sir, there is no room for saying anything to you, as you are a man of wit and a great poet; all that can be spoken that is worthy an ingenuous spirit, in the celebration of such faculties, has been incomparably said by yourself to others, or by others to you: you have never been excelled in this kind but by those who have written in praise of you: I will not pretend to be your rival even with such an advantage over you; but, assuring you, in Mr. Codrington's words, that I do not know whether my love or admiration is greater, I remain, Sir, your most faithful friend and most obliged, humble servant.

To Horace Walpole.

[From Steele's *Apology for Himself and His Writings*.]

[1715.]

SIR,

Whoever reads the following Apology will easily allow me, that I am much less concerned for the fame of a writer than that of an honest man. I have declared the assistances I had in composing the writings which are here defended; for the upright purpose, the innocent intention of them, is all which I am anxious to assert. In defence of truth I incurred popular hatred and contempt, with the prospect of suffering the want of even the ordinary conveniencies of life. The probability of being undone I could not but form to myself when I took upon me what I did; but a weight heavier than all this fell upon me, to wit, a resolution of the representative of my country to my dishonour. This indeed was a blow unexpected; nor could it enter into my imagination, that the insolence of any minister could run so high, as to demand of the House of Commons to punish one of its members for being unacceptable to him. The perusal of this pamphlet will convince the reader, there was not so much as the appearance of any other motive for my expulsion. The day of debate was indeed a very memorable one, and the persons concerned in it hugely worth suspending the councils of a nation. It was remarkable however, that such was the force

of truth, that the member accused had not an harsh personal expression used against him; and the minister, in the midst of all his power, who brought on the accusation, was treated in the manner which all mankind knows he deserves. As for my part, I ever thought meanly of the capacity, though not, till lately, of the good-nature of that demagogue, and saw very well his audaciousness would one day suffer by his ignorance. It was visible, whatever became of his country, which I believe had little share in his Lordship's cares, he would, with the wand in his hand, raise powers which he would want skill to command, and which consequently would tear him himself in pieces.

But, without dwelling upon the contemplation of mischiefs wrought by a cunning wicked creature, placed in a station proper only for a wife and virtuous man, I am now to give you my thanks for your generous defence of me in this great adversity. Your behaviour was indeed equally noble during the whole French administration, and your eloquence was of public service to your country, when the Prerogative was strained to the utmost, not to exalt our own Sovereign, but to compliment France with the greatness and interest of her, and her people. The intervention of Providence has given us a stand against the imminent destruction which such iniquity and folly had placed before our eyes, and men in great employments can now be safe without depending upon France.

I have mentioned Dunkirk till I am sick; and

there are not words to represent the infamous behaviour in a Ministry, to cover so great and pernicious an imposture upon their country, as the improvement of that port under the pretence of the demolition of it.

You have the honour and happiness to have eminently opposed all the incursions which these guilty men made upon the greatness of the Crown, and the welfare of the subject, by prostituting them both to their own selfish designs, and destroying, as far as in them lay, the good name of all men of virtue and service.

They have indeed reaped this good, that there can be nothing said of themselves, the worst servants that ever Sovereign employed, but what they had caused to be laid to the charge of those who were their predecessors; persons whose abilities had raised their country to such a grandeur, that nothing but the unnatural industry of her own ministers could lower, to the helpless condition to which they had reduced it.

These evils could not have been supported, had not the demagogues, by the abuse of power, deafened many in the Legislature against attention to the true interest of themselves and their country; while an inconsiderable creature, who had the good-will of no man, could manage aversions skilfully enough, to be suffered to destroy all, for fear of an alteration of affairs that might be grateful to an opposite party.

Were the following instance of the harsh and

odious disposition in gentlemen to sit determined, before hearing, the concern only of me and mine, it would not be worth troubling the world with so many words on that occasion ; but neither what I now write, nor what you much better spoke, is a case of so little consequence ; and when you undertook it, you knew you were pleading for the rights and liberties of the Commons of England ; and I will take upon me to say, that there never was a greater insult on the constitution than this, except one practised by the same person, without the least deference to the order of things, the common sense of mankind, the honour of the Crown, or the property of the subject.

It needs not be said what this greater impudence was, nor who had so little grace as to be guilty of it : it was he who was born in our days for the chastisement and dishonour of them, a tool whose insignificancy makes sorrow, occasioned by him, the subject of laughter, takes all dignity from distress, and renders calamity ridiculous.

As to my own part under the fantastical tyranny of the demagogue's administration, could what you said in the House be communicated to the publick, I should have no need of this defence ; but since I have not here the assistance of your eloquence, I beg the advantage of your name and character : for I know it will be an argument with every honest man that my cause was good, that you so zealously espoused it ; for that admirable talent of speaking, of which you are master, has never been prostituted

to serve dishonest purposes; and you have too candid a spirit, not to esteem it a praise, rather than disparagement of your eloquence, that the cause for which you have at any time pleaded needed no art but from the iniquity of its opposers.

The happy ability of explaining the most difficult parts of business to men wholly unacquainted with negociation, has been as useful to the publick as honourable to yourself. As you have detected the artful, so you have helped the ignorant of your very adversaries, according to their intention to abuse or serve their country.

It has been said, that the greatest art is to hide art; but you have a much better instrument towards persuasion, the having nothing to conceal; for truth is as certainly the greatest eloquence, as honesty is the best policy. Let those who speak or act against their conscience, obtain their little purposes and applauses; be it ever your commendation, to despise artifice, and practise uprightness. A long course of suffering for your zeal in an honest cause, has gained you the character of an open honest English gentleman, with a capacity which takes off the imputation of weakness from simplicity of manners, and adds the dignity of knowledge to the beauty of innocence.

As I never entered into political debates with ambitious views, but have brought my desires within the necessaries and decent conveniencies of life, I am the more jealously tenacious of the little I expect of the world; which is, only to accept of

my service to the best of my ability, without loading me with unjust reproach. In this reasonable expectation Mr. Walpole generously lent me his protection; and though he could not persuade my judges to do me justice, he convinced them I deserved a different sentence from what they pronounced. But, alas! they had learned, by long practice, to do shameful things without being ashamed; and though your arguments could command their assent, it could not make them utter it in my favour. You sent them away, I thank you, with the same thoughts of themselves which you had of them; and whatever force and oppression determined, in the eye of reason and conscience the judges were convict, and the accused man found innocent.

I humbly thank you for your eminent part in this affair, and congratulate you on receiving the favour of your Prince for your service to your country.

As doing good to the publick is the motive of conferring favours, it is, with such as you, the rule in enjoying them. I wish you the possession of all your frank heart desires; and am, with great respect, Sir, your most obliged, most obedient, and most humble servant.

To the King.

[From *The Conscious Lovers.*]

[1722.]

May it please Your Majesty,

After having aspired to the highest and most laudable ambition, that of following the cause of Liberty, I should not have humbly petitioned your Majesty for a direction of the theatre, had I not believed success in that province an happiness much to be wished by an honest man, and highly conducing to the prosperity of the commonwealth. It is in this view I lay before your Majesty a Comedy, which the audience, in justice to themselves, has supported and encouraged, and is the prelude of what, by your Majesty's influence and favour, may be attempted in future representations.

The imperial mantle, the royal vestment, and the shining diadem, are what strike ordinary minds; but your Majesty's native goodness, your passion for justice, and her constant assessor, Mercy, is what continually surrounds you, in the view of intelligent spirits, and gives hope to the suppliant, who sees he has more than succeeded in giving your Majesty an opportunity of doing good. Our King is above the greatness of royalty; and every act of his will, which makes another man happy, has ten times more charms in it than one that makes himself appear raised above the condition of others; but even this carries unhappiness with it; for calm dominion, equal grandeur, and familiar greatness,

do not easily affect the imagination of the vulgar, who cannot see power but in terror; and as fear moves mean spirits, and love prompts great ones to obey, the insinuations of malcontents are directed accordingly; and the unhappy people are insnared from want of reflection, into disrespectful ideas of their gracious and amiable Sovereign; and then only begin to apprehend the greatness of their Master when they have incurred his displeasure.

As your Majesty was invited to the throne of a willing people, for their own sakes, and has ever enjoyed it with contempt of the ostentation of it, we beseech you to protect us, who revere your title as we love your person. It is to be savage to be a rebel; and they who have fallen from you have not so much forfeited their allegiance as lost their humanity. And therefore, if it were only to preserve myself from the imputation of being amongst the insensible and abandoned, I would beg permission, in the most public manner possible, to profess myself, with the utmost sincerity and zeal, Sire, your Majesty's most devoted subject and servant.

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